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THE DESTINY OF EUROPE

BY AN AMERICAN

[THE author of this paper, an expert in finance and government, has returned from Europe after having held a series of penetrating conversations with officials, statisticians, and economists of rank. Beginning with the hard knot of international credit, he discloses secrets of national destiny.
— THE EDITORS]

I

IN the autumn of 1936 a financial arrangement was contrived by the three great commercial nations that have for one hundred years dominated war-making and peace-making in Western Europe and the North Atlantic. By virtue of this compact between the United States, France, and Great Britain, no one of the participating governments would countenance, much less assist, any effort on the part of its own citizens or on that of foreigners to depress its currency in international markets. Each participating country would be prepared to furnish gold from its exchange fund or central bank, at the market price of gold, to balance its accounts with the exchange fund or central bank of each of the other participating countries, in terms of their currencies. Each country might or might not be called upon to furnish gold, but it must be ready to do so. Each country would see to it that enough of the currency of each of the other participating countries would be purchased from the central bank or exchange fund of that country to meet the legitimate trade requirements of its own citizens. There was virtually a free market for gold as between the three treasuries and three central banks, with the basic limitation that the Treasury of the United States had a rigid commitment to take all gold entering this country, or produced within it, at thirty-five dollars an ounce.

The understanding — implemented by administrative measures in subsequent months — was extended later to include three other countries, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland; but there are no reciprocal commitments between any one of the last-named countries and either Great Britain or France — only between each of the three countries 'adhering' to

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the agreement and the United States. Other countries may later see fit to adhere to the arrangement, assuming reciprocal commitments with the United States. Such countries will assume the responsibility for furnishing dollars for the needs of trade between their citizens and those of the United States, and their own currencies when the American Treasury's Stabilization Fund wishes to accumulate holdings therein so as to satisfy requirements of American importers from those countries or American capital exploiting natural resources in those countries. But the American Treasury insists upon the right to convert its holdings of such currencies into gold at a day's notice, when it deems it wise to lighten accumulations that have grown too heavy.

Of course there are countries that find it indispensable to fall in with the humor in which our government happens to be. France had to find some international mask for the devaluation of last September, and any arrangement with Washington would have been useful then, perhaps later serving as a bridge to more satisfactory coöperation. Great Britain was willing to support the franc for a number of reasons, and did not wish to be left out of any understanding between Washington and Paris. Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium were vitally concerned with large capital movements; and they could therefore bring themselves to take a step which involved some serious disadvantages. But countries with small gold reserves cannot commit themselves to provide for the convertibility of their currencies into gold at the request of Washington. After all, only creditor countries can have much interest in Washington's undertaking to furnish enough of their currencies to American interests having payments to make to their citizens.

There was no commitment assumed by anyone, explicitly or collaterally, with respect to the relative values of the currencies concerned. The *hope* was expressed that the exchange rates then prevailing would be maintained; but no one undertook to see that they would continue to prevail. Apparently Washington authorities felt that the pound could remain worth $4.90 or $5.00, or somewhat less, more or less indefinitely; and that a range of from four to five cents for the franc would be equally practicable to maintain. But in London a distinctly different view prevailed. If the normal pressure of trade or of capital movements (including the pressure of the repatriation of funds held abroad by American banks and investors) should tend to weaken the pound in terms of dollars, Great Britain would not resist it to the extent of sacrificing her resources, merely to guarantee any given ratio of pound to dollar. The British could not do more than smooth out the 'natural' process if the pound should drift down to $4.70 or $4.50, because of heavy commodity movements from the United States to England, or because of transfers of funds from England to the United States.

It is not alone to the United States that the British politely decline to give hostages for fixed exchange rates. The unanimous view of the Continental authorities has been for a year that England should fix a new gold content of the pound and be done with it. But England, so far as any concrete and articulate expression of policy is to be had, maintains that she cannot fix that content so long as London has some 350 to 400 million pounds in the form of demand deposits of foreign origin, or foreign holdings of British securities — money of which much may be poised and ready to take flight as soon as the pound is fixed. Such an outflow would derange the exchange machinery severely, and send up short-term money rates in a fashion altogether out of

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keeping with the objectives of British Treasury floating-debt operations and rearmament financing.

Formulas like that of the financial coöperation of last September acquire a meaning only after circumstances and events have poured a content into them. Time and the growth of mutual confidence will be required to have this arrangement mean anything more than a transitory act to assist France without curbing, even for a day, the appetite of Washington's Golden Hoard.

If, gradually, a sufficient degree of reciprocal confidence is built up between the respective treasuries and central banks, it is possible that fluctuations in exchange can be ironed out to the minimum, even though the American Fund has to acquire very large holdings of European currencies, forbearing to convert these at once into gold.

If this state of affairs were to last long enough, presumably the American Government could one day bring itself to announce the permanent stabilization of the dollar, so as to represent about 13½ grains of fine gold, provided that the pound were then given a value of, say, $4.80. The way would then be clear for other countries to adjust their currencies, if not already 'aligned' with the debased dollar and depreciated pound, to calculable international ratios.

But if the understanding of September is not destined to operate successfully, what may occur? The Treasury at Washington may accumulate foreign currencies in volume, and from time to time press hard on the London free market, actually weakening in the future the monetary structures it professes to wish to strengthen. Our resources are such that we can go on creating an imposing fabric of public and private indebtedness for a long time before the first ominous rumble of collapse would be heard. That indebtedness bears no direct or contractual relation to the precious metal legally represented by our currency. If we implacably absorb the gold and silver that the rest of the world owns, or can produce (and produce from deposits deeper or harder to work than those prudently worth while operating when 23⅕ grains of gold brought only $20.67), then are we not running the risk of trying the patience of the rest of the world beyond endurance? Gradually it may dawn on us that for this gold and silver we are giving goods and services, and thereby interweaving our economic life more closely with that of the rest of the world while both we and they profess and practise varying types of aggressive economic nationalism.

But no practical value can attach to a discussion of the future of monetary and financial coöperation between the United States and other countries which leaves out of account four topics: the trade balance, the armament race, the budgetary outlook, and the war-debt negotiations. The briefest summary of certain aspects of these factors seems in order in this place.

II

The recovery of trade, in terms of volume, is observable throughout Western Europe. It has been most rapid in England, where its start was rooted in the policies of domestic nationalism in 1931–1932 and later. A great demand for housing accommodations made itself felt in the last ten years: for there were more marriages per thousand inhabitants than in any previous period, owing to the fact that the demographic distribution in England just prior to the war showed an exceptional number of children, in spite of the already declining reproduction rate. This housing demand, together with the large-scale

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municipal and coöperative improvements in housing, will probably account for the investment, all told, from 1933 to 1937 of over 200 million pounds, according to authoritative calculations. It has been the chief stimulation that English industry has enjoyed, and it has set going all sorts of secondary activities. Low interest rates have prevailed, thanks in part to the good sense of the Building Societies, and thanks, too, to the presence in London of fugitive money.

Apart from housing, there has been in England a recovery in shipbuilding, and in the so-called engineering trades. Agriculture, too, has improved remarkably, as a result of market regulation, grading standards, and a number of subsidies. This improvement in agriculture has been at heavy cost, as the London taxpayers view it, for it has steadily invited collision with the interests of countries normally heavy consumers of British manufactures paid for in agricultural products. But the self-sufficiency argument, based on military and naval considerations, now outweighs every adverse economic point.

International trade, as between European countries themselves, was better in volume at the beginning of 1937 than it had been at the end of 1935; earnings were beginning to show an improvement reflecting the debasement of currencies and the corresponding rise in prices. Expansion has had to struggle against some fairly formidable obstacles in the last two years, for even rearmament programmes serve initially to derange other and less spectacularly profitable industrial and commercial activities. Since devaluation, the shipbuilding industry of the Netherlands has received encouraging orders for motor ships of from five to ten thousand tons, from Scandinavia, Poland, and elsewhere; and the Dutch engineering trades have picked up some business. Switzerland and France have also received some additional foreign business for their characteristic products, and their tourist trade is recovering. Long before devaluation, commodity prices and railroad and hotel rates had all been reduced in both countries. Although not yet in sight of compensating fully for the devaluation of the French franc, prices in France are markedly higher than they were last spring. In the case of building contracts, automobiles, and other capital items or quasi-capital expenditures, the upswing has been causing uneasiness and much shaking of heads over the wisdom of the 'indeterminate' devaluation, whereby an elastic ratio of one franc representative of something between 43 and 49 milligrams of gold was established. From the beginning, the French themselves have generally felt that the experimental value of 46 milligrams would be abandoned, and the franc ultimately lowered to 43 milligrams. This reduction may have to be resorted to if the latest step to create a free market for gold should prove ineffective.

With Latin America and North America, Africa, Australia, and the Far East, European trade is genuinely better, even in terms of volume. Devaluation all round has once more enhanced the purchasing power of those countries which produce raw materials. The Argentine, South Africa, and Australia lead the way. South Africa's recovery has been, of course, a by-product of the rise in the price of gold brought about by the Government of the United States since 1933. Just as raw-material countries are the first to be prostrated by slumps, and the victims of really acute paralysis of money economy in any form, just so are they the first to experience abrupt and radical recovery through all branches of production. Europe is increasing her exports to the raw-material countries. It is quite apparent that if labor costs

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stay down in Europe, taken as a whole, while they are rising in the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Latin America (at different rates, of course), nothing can prevent Europe, as a whole, from recovering the bulk of her former export trade with the countries mentioned — even with the United States and Canada. The imports into the United States of European manufactured goods during 1937 are destined to be substantial.

On the other hand, Europe as a whole is beginning to import increased quantities of raw materials. Partly is this the case because of manufacturing requirements of ordinary industry, but more particularly is it the consequence of programmes for rearmament.

III

The nature and extent of rearmament are beyond the scope and purpose of this discussion. Yet everyone in Europe is aware that much is going on. A quiet exodus from city dwellings into houses inconspicuous from the air and relatively distant has been under way for a year or two in more than one capital; and the construction of bombproof cellars is now a common occurrence. There are thousands and thousands of planes in Europe and Asia, as a whole, many of them capable of a speed of two hundred miles an hour even though carrying one or more immense bombs, each of which is capable of leveling a good-sized city block. Great subterranean airports have been constructed, with capacities for hundreds of planes, together with plants for their repair, for the manufacture of munitions, and for the generation of power, as well as living accommodations for large forces of men. It is known that behind certain frontiers cannon of vast range have been placed. Along other frontiers all the intersecting roads are mined, while an almost unbroken wall of steel rails, deeply imbedded in the soil and interlocked so as to be heavily charged with electricity, will arrest, if only for a few days, the progress of tanks and trucks. What one country develops, with no matter what secrecy, the others find out. Espionage is rampant. And each country must have at least as good an equipment as its potential enemy. The race in preparation must in a short time reach a point, for all but the richest nations, where the risks of war itself are no greater than those of obsolescence.

For what are they all preparing? England wants no war anywhere; France wants none. Italy, surely, has had enough of war and has a generation of developmental work in an unresponsive area ahead of her; and Germany — no one really knows her wishes. The German Government constantly insists that it wishes only peace and to be left alone; but in the next breath it heaps provocative abuse and menaces on Russia. German efforts to absorb Austria have been abandoned, and so far Mussolini has won the game over the control of Central and Southeastern Europe. He has blocked Germany by force and brutal negative while he has sought to outbid her in Vienna, Budapest, Athens, Ankara, Bucharest, Sofia, and even Prague and Beograd. But the two great totalitarian States have one thing in common — determination that Communism shall not triumph in Spain. They appear ready to go far to prevent it; the action of each will be independent of that of the other, but if action by both comes it will come so promptly as to seem concerted. The French authorities know this; and they are sincerely doing their best to hold Europe back from war.

There is far less sympathy with Largo Caballero and his Communist-Anarchist allies in France than is generally supposed in the United States. French

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Communist leaders seem disposed to try to persuade the workers that Blum is another bourgeois politician in disguise, and that the Socialist deputies should be replaced by Communist deputies in the next election. The bitterness between the Communists and Socialists in the Chamber exceeds that between Socialists and Republicans. Blum is gravitating toward a loose and tacit working arrangement with the liberal groups in the Centre. His domestic policies show this; his foreign policies more sharply still. French Socialists realize that a Communist victory in Spain would permanently place French Socialism between two fires at home — militant Communism desirous of copying Spain, and a terrifying recrudescence of man-on-horseback sentiment. What they would wish in Spain now is a compromise of such a character as to preserve the radical structure of government, but to subordinate greatly the extreme elements (Communistic or Anarchistic).

Does Russia want war now? What are the real objectives of Japan? Does the German-Japanese treaty offset the Franco-Russian? Here we approach the most critical and at the same time most complex problems that to-day confront mankind. The writer shares the conviction of many observers of the trend of European affairs that Russia is destined to be the dominant figure in world politics over most of the next twoscore years, in the sense in which the British Empire held that rôle from the eclipse of the Second Empire in France until the eve of the Great War.

Russia is neither European nor Asiatic, but Eurasian. For twenty years her destinies have been in the hands of personalities fundamentally Asiatic in background and outlook; and her chief significance in the world has been that of an Asiatic revolt against European systems of thought, philosophy, religion, morality, economics, and politics. Like Japan, she has availed herself of Western technology in any obtainable way — dumping her raw materials over the world this last decade, just as Japan dumped her cheap textiles and other products, to get dollars, sterling, and other currencies. The foreign exchange thus scooped together has been invested in the apparatus of capital-goods production: hydroelectric installations, mining machinery, textile machinery, steel plants, chemical plants, laboratories, agricultural experiment stations, model fisheries, and so on. It is not *good will* looking to *permanent markets* at which Japan and Russia aim; it is immediate cash proceeds available to be invested in the technological developments of the Western World, in turn intended to extract the raw materials of Asia so as to create great, new, independent economic systems of their own. They may or may not fight now, or within a half-dozen years, for the leadership of Asia; but whether they fight or not, they will eventually divide between them the huge field of Asiatic exploitation, and together exert the power of attraction over subsidiary areas of economic activity, such as those of Southeastern Asia and that great stretch of land between Egypt and the Persian Gulf which for forty centuries has been the meeting place of ideas and races and a starting point of history, and which to-day constitutes such a reservoir of mineral wealth.

IV

The great nations of Europe really sense, if they do not clearly perceive, this rearrangement of the constellations of earthly power. The German nervousness is not merely the result of the accidental associations of Adolf Hitler and his fellow adventurers before arriving in power; it is a recognition of something the statesman Bismarck and the

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theorist Naumann saw a half century ago, when the former sought so to navigate as never to have Germany and Russia on opposite sides. The British Government senses uneasily, and has sensed for three generations, the menace to the Empire's Asiatic position in the rise of the foremost Slavic power. The Dominions dislike Japan, some of them to the point of incurable suspicion and abhorrence; and English mercantile interests in India and China likewise detest Japan's cutthroat competition. But the Imperial Government sees the picture as a whole, and considers Russia the more pervasive and dangerous foe. In France and Holland there are no illusions as to what the fate of their great colonial areas in Asia will be when the Japanese Empire reaches full growth; and the Russophil sentiments of France are partly explainable in terms of the less direct source of danger to France's position in the Far East represented by Russia.

Does England to-day view the German-Japanese understanding as a greater or lesser menace than the Franco-Russian? It is hard to say. Probably no consensus of opinion really exists as yet in governmental circles, for both combinations have elements that conflict with British points of view. The totalitarian ideal is distasteful to the aristocratic and bureaucratic rulers of the Empire; and the British would like to see France 'in better company.'

The French are not afraid of Germany, but they are coming to believe that they made a mistake at the Peace Conference in yielding from the position of Foch that Germany must once for all be rendered innocuous. They are convinced that all the German talk about Russia is merely to distract attention from Germany's preparations to overwhelm France without even a declaration of war. They declare that 80 per cent of the German army is already massed in Western Germany, ready to strike so swiftly that no aid could be had for France. But France is not unprepared. Her military men and those of Great Britain have been carrying on conferences at intervals for some months, reviewing decisive aspects of common action in the event of unprovoked attack on France by Germany. When the British Foreign Secretary, last December, gave such categorical assurances of British intervention on Germany's behalf in the event of unprovoked attack on Germany, he did so with the foreknowledge and consent of France. The truth would seem to be that, little by little, unity of control over foreign policy is being restored to the Foreign Office in England, and the Admiralty's invasion of that field with the Ribbentrop Naval Agreement (whereby England recognized Germany's right to a navy 35 per cent as strong as England's), which exasperated the French at the time, is being quietly played down. Germany seems now to realize that England's policy, if shunted off the middle of the road, is far more likely to veer toward France than toward Germany.

England may not know her own mind yet on everything, but she does on two things: she wants no war anywhere if it is at all possible to prevent it, and she wants no autocratic régime set up in France. So the British Government will go a long way in bolstering the conglomerate régime over which Léon Blum presides. It was the realization that Blum's failure to solve the monetary problem might lead to internal tension and the collapse of representative government in France that drew the British Treasury, no matter with what reluctance, to commit Great Britain (in a very limited degree, to be sure) to coöperation in support of the franc.

Throughout Europe, budgetary orthodoxy is tacitly shelved. For the last half-dozen years the British Govern-

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ment has made commendable efforts to live within income. Its policy of genuine frugality was almost the only gleam of light on the dull gray expanse of fiscal hopelessness. But now England, too, is financing defense preparation from floating-debt operations, which are in turn greatly facilitated as long as the London money market has all the fugitive capital to which allusion has been made. It is this discouraging fact which stands in the way of any readiness to stabilize the pound so long as that action might render floating-debt operations materially more expensive, by causing the outflow of funds likely to be on deposit in London provided the British policy of not forcing events continues in effect.

On the Continent, budgetary disorder is rampant. The Netherlands and Scandinavia are still able to live within income, but the rest of Europe is borrowing against the future. Tax evasion and currency depreciation, both on a reckless and demoralizing scale, will be the certain fruit of it all. But 'national defense' comes before everything, and the advocates of sound finance (unhappily never very numerous anywhere) are hardly to be heard in the din of munitions and airplane manufacture.

V

Long as this digression over the political aims and possible conflict of European and Asiatic powers may have seemed, it serves to explain, first the growing volume of European imports of raw materials, secondly the effect of rearmament on national budgets. Only Great Britain and France are rich enough to go on buying war materials very long for cash, and even they will soon need credit.

At this point there climbs on the stage the unshriven ghost of the intergovernmental War Debt Agreements made between 1923 and 1927. There was one consolation in the Quadrennium of Insolvency that opened in 1929 — namely, that the war debts seemed certain to be buried forever, along with the tribute known as reparation payments. The last ounce of bargaining value which the war debts possessed had evaporated when Messrs. Coolidge and Hoover failed to make use of the opportunity to negotiate material reductions in military and related expenditure in Europe through the offer of corresponding reductions of the debts. Since no one high in public office has ever had the courage to tell the American people the unpalatable truth about the war debts, it is better circumspectly to avoid the subject, which is apparently what Mr. Roosevelt has sought to do. But the default in payment is a barrier to further credit operations on a funded basis in the American money market, by reason of the Johnson Act. Hence American interests chiefly concerned with the rapid expansion of such credit operations are eager to see something done soon to remove the barrier of default; and they have pressed European officials to make some move toward a fresh settlement of the war debts such as would get them out of the way a 'decent interval' before any new borrowing, or the funding of ordinary banking indebtedness, has to be undertaken. Sooner or later, we may conclude, a formula will be found which will look enough like a refunding to lift the curse of the Johnson Act. Then, in the course of a reasonable time thereafter, the effort to effectuate borrowing on long terms may be expected.

It is appropriate, perhaps, to summarize the monetary situation of the world at this stage, before venturing upon general conclusions.

1. Virtually all currencies of commercial importance are now from a quarter to two-fifths debased, thanks to the unprovoked recklessness of the American gold 'policy' since 1933.

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I say virtually all, since only a few currencies maintain their old nominal standards, and no country in the world is converting its paper currency into the gold which that currency represents.

2. A loose arrangement exists whereby the secretly operated exchange funds of the United States, France, and Great Britain, and certain other stabilizing agencies, profess to coöperate in holding fairly close those exchange levels which political expediency in each country seems to prescribe.

3. The arrangement in question may be ended at brief notice, after serving as little more than a new source of controversy, according to the way the statesmen concerned proceed to 'coöperate.'

4. Nearly all European budgets are out of balance now or on the point of becoming so; and the chief cause is rearmament.

5. The world's total volume of international trade is increasing, not so rapidly as its aggregate money value, but enough to absorb more and more of the unemployed; but the chief cause of the expansion is again rearmament.

6. War may come over Spain, or may not come for several years, but the tension of its imminence and the strain of getting ready for it will be destructive enough.

VI

'In the long run, there is nothing more practical than sound theory,' as the Swedish monetary expert, Gustav Cassel, once succinctly expressed it. And in no period is there greater need for a clear grasp of theoretical principle than when everything seems afloat, drifting anchorless. The war developed no great leadership, in the military, economic, constructive, or moral fields: it developed a planetary plague of bureaucracy and State-worship. Equally leaderless, the United States and Europe drifted into formulas worked out now by lawyers and now by business men's organizations; and finally into financial demoralization, when the thoroughly unsound structure of Central European business resting upon the American financing of reparation payments (and, indirectly, of war-debt payments) broke down. The events of June 1931 were easily predictable after those of October 1929, those of September 1931 equally predictable in June 1931, while those of March 1933 were the clear consequence of those of September 1931. And in the summer of 1933 it was reasonable to point out that we were headed for a prolonged decline in the purchasing power of the dollar, which would take our price levels and labor costs incredibly high. Mr. Roosevelt's wires were crossed in such appalling confusion in 1934, in consequence of his improvised experiments with control of industry, that his monetary policies failed to lift prices as he had expected would be the case; and in 1935 and 1936 an enormous influx of foreign capital cluttered up the banks, stimulated Stock Exchange operations, and delayed again the price rise.

We now have in the United States all the ingredients for a rise in both wholesale and retail prices, very great in degree and prolonged in duration. There is no better prospect in Europe, although until about a year ago there was a chance of Europe's remaining reasonably steadfast, despite all her rancors and rivalries, and preventing the wholesale wastage of savings and the ruin of private property. But one leaves Europe in these days greatly depressed. Those men of foresight and ripe judgment who have been left in control of central banking and economic policy are crowded each day more and more by the exigencies of military or agrarian or some other special interest; and there is as ineffective control by the central banks over these special interests as in the United States in recent years.

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Night has fallen over a great cultural area before, a long night in which little light flickered and few memories survived. The very knowledge itself which men in one part of the world had of remote regions disappeared, and left almost no trace, when generation succeeded generation without a reason for going outside the ever-narrowing limits of local trade. Night seems destined to settle down over Europe, slowly, imperceptibly, but none the less completely. It will not come at once. There will be the same atmosphere of enduring peace in British cathedral towns and Swiss valleys next year and later, the same refined cosmopolitanism in the best restaurants of Paris that we have seen before; but Europe seems to be coming into that twilight zone which follows the midday glory of her centuries as the Grande Dame of all the continents, the Queen of Civilization, and will perhaps precede the rapid shrinkage of querulous decrepitude.

But are Europe's children able to preserve the heritage of thought and action she can — and must — assign to them? The Western Hemisphere, the fringes of Africa and Asia, are to-day extensions and adaptations of dynamic racial forces and creative ideas of Hellenic, Roman, Celtic, Germanic, and Semitic origin. Those regions were the frontiers of Europe, ever receding, ever drawing the most restless, the most energetic, the most enterprising elements from the original matrix — drawing them, in some cases, such as Spain and Ireland, to the point of exhaustion, so that a definitely different breed was left to shape the future of the particular stock. Are the daughter nations mature enough now to carry on, and to lift the fragile mechanism of civilized order, internal and external, to higher and safer levels? This is the vital question. For Europe, despite her populousness at this moment, will not have a great deal more to give her daughter peoples in the way of physical endowment, and perhaps her once so imposing fund of creative ideas will grow thin and intermittent.

Everywhere in Europe to-day one has the impression of dealing with a social order that no longer has an income, so to speak, but is living on its capital. England is living on her capital. London's impressive residential and official setting is all suggestive of successive waves of additions to the physical capital of the nation — down to a generation or so ago; and since then only rehabilitation, improvement, if you like, but not the exuberant expansion, the confidence in the future, of a social order which sees itself growing. The British population, predominantly of middle age and advancing years, is on the point of showing an excess of deaths over births. Its outlook on life is colored accordingly. France too, and Holland, Switzerland, to a less extent Belgium, may be said to be living on capital. Germany has a fading concept of 'capital' in the old sense, and considers her human capital as her only capital. In a certain sense, this is the sound position to take. But, from the current commercial and financial point of view, Germany's resources consist chiefly of the remnants of capital left over from the days when she could still borrow, and before the fusion of her economy with militaristic totalitarianism.

Think what this means for the survival of private property. To an extent that is rarely comprehended, the economic structure of Central and Western Europe, and the Western Hemisphere (leaving collectivized and discredited Mexico out of account), rests upon a foundation of mortgages. Much, perhaps half, of the cultivated soil in the regions just enumerated is mortgaged. Far more than half the residential space of the urban communities therein is mortgaged. Most of the business prem-

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ises, industrial or commercial, the world over are mortgaged. The mortgage dominates the means of transportation, of diversion; and charity, education, religion, and institutional facilities for health conservation and restoration all depend for their maintenance or extension directly upon the readiness of part of the community to advance initial capital funds. The institution of insurance has developed in step with the progress men have made in safeguarding contracts for mortgages; and the mortgage investment of, say, the life insurance companies of Switzerland, Great Britain, the United States, and Canada, taken together, far outweighs any other category, perhaps all other categories, of their investment.

When nations cease to grow, and arrive at the 'settling down' stage, the structure of mortgages just alluded to undergoes a profound transformation. If the nation is living on its capital, and fewer and fewer children under five years are recorded in its successive censuses, the old houses suffice, the old buildings will serve until their repair exceeds the cost of replacement, just as the man in upper middle years generally grows more and more indifferent to the up-to-dateness of his clothes, prefers the old chair, and does n't pine for expensive travel. It is n't lack of imagination, and it is far less often than people suppose a sentimental attachment to the 'monuments' and family houses and so on. *It is a subconscious realization of progressive enfeeblement* which runs through every vital chord in the aging individual, or, in somewhat analogous fashion, through every aging society. Even nations can come to realize (without anyone's saying so, or even articulately thinking the whole situation through) that they can't do the things that were done decades, generations, or centuries earlier. History is full of fascinating revivals, as they appear to be, when prophets and leaders have risen up to 'restore all things as they were in the days of our fathers.' The Old Testament is one long record of such inspiring zeal, and the history of Islam, and the mystical epic of the 'Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation,' and so on. But when the 'revivals' occur, what is 'revived' is essentially distinct from its ideal objective. Mussolini has perfected and rendered far more efficient the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century bureaucracies of Tuscany, of the House of Savoy, of Cavour and Giolitti: he has *not* re-created the Roman Empire, no matter how many stretches of what once composed that Empire he should pick up. How could it be otherwise? Vast racial changes have taken place, and new interests have been created. Italy's dramatic 'resurgence' is ever reaching after an ideal never again capable of materialization. So with the other nations in Europe, one in one way, the next in another way, all going in for nationalism, and discipline, and exaltation, like middle-aged men taking up 'setting-up' exercises or diets or social work and other lofty occupations.

VII

As one contemplates the daughter nations, particularly in the New World, on the eve as it were of the division of a grand estate which Old Lady Europe, after long years of strenuous use (and abuse) of what she inherited from antiquity, is about to pass on to them, he asks himself whether the division and transfer of the estate of European civilization can take place without greatly impairing its essential unities and values. And must the world yearn again for centuries for the realization of the ideal of universality as it did from the fourth century until the Age of Discovery altered the vision and structure of society?

Put in practical terms, this query

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may be translated to mean that there is real reason to question whether the next twenty-five or forty years will not see a progressive recession of Europe from the economic power it has so long exerted, while the natural units of the Western Hemisphere, and in Asia, Africa, and Australia, begin to create new focal points of economic activity, new economic 'solar systems,' as it were. Some of them, more advanced than others, may for a while seem to have inherited the matriarchal primacy of Mother Europe, but only in appearance. Have we, in the United States, looking at ourselves objectively, the intellectual and moral qualities for which such a primacy will call, the spiritual responsiveness to those demands which are made in the name of the Rule of Law? Judging ourselves fairly from what we are to-day, are we going to be ready, when Europe as a whole sinks into contemplation of the past, to take up the responsibility for formulating not so much the law as the moral sanction on which the law rests?

We cannot even acquire a leadership in the Western Hemisphere in decades and decades unless changes, now remote, first come to pass. For example, our whole attitude toward long-term investment in the other countries of the hemisphere will have to change; and it is not easy to imagine the use of our accumulations of gold as the basis of a comprehensive and enlightened policy when it can serve as the bulwark for the permanent entrenchment of Collectivism, and the machine that administers it, at home. We must go through a long ordeal of internal growth and suffering, perhaps attaining the degree of veritable paroxysm, before we reach the maturity of character and serenity of view that alone in the record of mankind have earned the seat of lawgiver and interpreter. That ordeal will begin with a prolonged period of currency depreciation, all the worse because the Old World will not be in condition to check or even reprove our excesses. Such an experience implies lasting uncertainty as to the security of long-term engagements, — that is, essentially, of mortgages, — and so the trend of the *real* interest rate, the earning power of saved capital, will become difficult to predict, because of the double affliction of arrested growth in population and the gradual breakdown of the inviolability of private property.

It is better to try to look through all the smoke and squalor of this half century ahead of us and to know how long and difficult the road is which we must traverse. Fear is universal, and generates violence of thought, word, and action. Confidence in the dependability of long-term engagements is no greater to-day than five years ago over most of the world. *Security*, not *liberty*, is now the paramount concern of the individual, of groups, of nations. The sanction of confidence has given way to the sanction of force. Abroad men have either actively aided or passively accepted the transformation of representative governments of various types into authoritarian governments. At home a quarter century of treatment of legislative bodies as fit objects for ridicule has prepared the way for an analogous apotheosis of the Presidency. Years of constitutional controversy probably lie ahead of us. Through all of this, and much more, we must go on, soberly conscious of the perils on every side, yet unflinching in the serene belief that some road to humane, enlightened, and self-disciplined Social Order there must be.

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THE INFLUENCE OF MY FATHER ON MY SON

BY LINCOLN STEFFENS

I

If my father could watch my son for a while, he might realize his own immortality. A glance would not suffice. My brown-eyed, brown-haired son does not look like my red-headed, blue-eyed father. Not a bit. And the immortality I speak of has not taken on the angelic form my good father expected. The child is more like his grandfather than that. My father would invite me sweetly to come and sit on a stool at his feet, and, as I let myself trustingly down, he would gently kick the seat from under me — and laugh. I should like to have had him see his little grandson plant his sled on the basement door mat and call me out to stumble over the trap — and laugh. In both cases the victim, the devilish spirit, and the laugh were the same. So I say that if my father had the time to give to the observation of my son he might realize, if not his immortality, then the partial continuity of his character, disposition, and certainly his influence upon his line, and be — not satisfied, perhaps, but convinced, surprised, and — let me guess — amused or embarrassed.

He would be amused to see Pete, a child of six, who did not know his grandfather, wave his hand in the identical gesture my father used to make to indicate that a questionable assertion of his was obvious or final and decisive. I was highly pleased myself when I first noticed it and recognized my father. I called it an inheritance direct from him till my matter-of-fact wife showed me that I had the same wave and used it in saying I did n't.

My son's mother, by the way, spoils many of our most wonderful fancies, Pete's and mine, and that 's why he and I have agreed upon a sentiment which we say in unison behind her back, and sometimes in her presence. We sing: 'Pete and Papa are wonderful. Mama and Anna [the maid] are ab-surd.'

My father would be amused at that, anyhow. He would say, 'S-s-s-h! Don't say such things,' but he would recognize in it himself and his son and his wife and my mother. He and I were often in cahoots against my mother, affectionately, on the side. Mothers do not always understand a fellow.

He would have been surprised and he might have been embarrassed when I did not rebuke my son, as he would have rebuked his son, for tripping his father over that sled. This I'll call indirect inheritance. My father, the practical joker, did not care for practical jokes on himself; he did not encourage the practice in me. I saw and I have reacted against this inconsistency with my son. I tease, too; I don't approve of it, but my father and my grandfather in me make me play tricks on my boy, so I have to let him have

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some fun with me. But my son inherits the benefit of at least one half of my father's fault.

My father required me to honor my father and my mother too much to put up games on them. I did on occasion. (That's how I know that my son can't help it.) I let my father mount my pony one afternoon in time to ride past the neighboring brewery just as the engineer let off steam, and my father was pitched off; and I laughed behind a tree, where, however, my father found me and — Well, I don't do to my little boy what he did to his little boy. I feel my father in me want to, but I remember him and my feelings, and I laugh. The family laugh at the family trait.

My son 'honors' his mother, as I did mine. He would not plant a sled for his mother, as I would not for mine. On the other hand, if my son breaks something, he will run to tell me about it first, and then, when his mother discovers the wreck, he backs into my arms and bids her not to speak of it.

'Daddy minded that,' he says.

I asked him once why it was that he respected his mother and had no fear of me.

'Oh,' he said, 'you are a funny man. You can get mad, like Mama, but you laugh. And — and anybody that laughs can't — can't do — what Mama does.'

My father would have been surprised to hear this, as I was. My father was slower but he was severer than my mother, who was quick but light and irregular in discipline. It is just so in my son's family. My mother would thump me sharply on the head with a thimble or a spoon if I became too noisy with the whistle when I was playing I was a steamboat captain. She had no sense of the dignity of command. My father seemed always to know not only what I was doing, but what I was being. He had too much respect for a steamboat captain to humiliate me before my crew. If I committed a crime, he would not break into the scene and spoil it; he would say quietly, as between him and me, 'I'll see you to-morrow morning right after breakfast about this.' Now I find that I preferred my father's way and I take it with his grandson, who likewise prefers it. His mother will call suddenly: 'Pete! It's bedtime,' when she thinks of it, and off he must go, regardless of his occupation. I look first, to see that he is busy with, say, an important building operation, and I would no more interrupt him than I would a crooked contractor. If it's late, I join my builder, we finish the job, and then he goes satisfied to bed, the day's work done.

One improvement I have learned from my childhood experience with my father; I do not threaten punishment in the morning. That was awful. Late into the night I would lie awake tossing and wondering what he was going to do to me. Usually he did nothing. A quiet, impressive 'talking to' was all I got. And no doubt his idea was that the postponement of penalty — to save himself from acting in anger — would set me to thinking and be punishment enough, but my father did not visualize the anxiety, the agony of my sleepless hours of anticipation. Hence it is that I do visualize a bad night, and so we go to bed in Pete's house with a clean slate and a happy morrow to wake up to. No hang-overs for us, and I am pretty sure Pete feels this benefit he has from my correction of my father's error. At the end of a 'serious talk' the boy and I had one day, he rested a moment, then got up and said: 'Well, that's all over, is n't it?' and I assured him it was. 'We'll forget it now, Pete, and never mention it again.'

II

Dealing with my son makes me recall my father so clearly that I think now

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that I could state his policy with me and his philosophy, if he had one. Of the philosophy I am not sure. His acts and his sayings to me were all in the direction of freedom and independence. I let my boy go and do and say pretty much as he likes, as, and perhaps because, my father kept no string on me. I could roam as a child far afield; he gave me my pony to widen my range; and I am sure that I went where my parents did not know I went. My mother would ask where I had been, rarely my father, and he backed me up if I did not want to tell — at the time.

'No, don't ask him that now,' he would say to my mother. 'He will tell us if he goes anywhere he should n't.' And later, sometime when the pressure was off, I would tell him that, say, I had gone down to the dangerous one of our two rivers. That was forbidden. I was afraid myself of that river; it looked cruel, snarling, grasping, but my mother's fear was excited and unreasonable. I could not tell her I had been there. My father, when I told him, would become very quiet, thoughtful, till, looking up inquiringly, he would say: —

'You have been told not to go to that river?'

'Yes.'

A pause. 'You don't often disobey us, do you?'

'No.'

'You must have wanted very much to go there if you disregarded our command that way. What was it that made you do it?'

I gave him my boy's reason, straight: a man had been drowned and I wanted to see them drag for the body.

'Did you?' he asked, interested.

'Yes, we saw them drag, but they did n't get the body.' And, because he was so keen, I described all that we boys saw, and did, and said, just as I would to 'another fellow.' We had a long, equal talk about the day's work on the river and I had forgotten all about my disobedience when my father said: —

'I should have liked to see that myself. I wish you had come by my office and taken me with you. Do that next time. Give me a chance. And say, I would n't again disobey directly like that any of the few rules we lay down for you.' That was all, except that at the next meal my father told my mother before me the story of my day without any reference to the disobedience part. He told it well, too; to my satisfaction, but not to my mother's. She kept saying, 'But — but — '

I loved my mother, but — but — my father respected me. He respected, as you see, my disobedience; he respected my bunk, my lies, my crimes. When I was a fireman, my mother made me clothes of red stuff that were suitable to a firefighter — sure; and she let me ride my pony to fires; but when one day there was an alarm during dinner and I leaped up so quick that I nearly upset the table, she remonstrated and forbade me to go to that fire. I was n't really a fireman to her. To my father I was. He sprang up too, put out a hand to stay my mother's indignation, and he shouted: 'Go it, boy! Get there — first!' I did. I got first to that fire, and when I came back I found that it had been settled in the family that I could go, fast, to any fire that occurred any time when I was on duty, any time of day except when I was in school or in bed.

This I have passed on intact to Pete, with a smile added. When the boy was in the so-called lying period (he was about five years old) he learned to tell his big stories to me rather than his mother. She was patient with them, but they were whoppers just the same. I joined in his fiction, as I did in his building or business operations. We ran a garage, I as owner, he as manager; we had a taxi and baggage service, which met all trains and responded,

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fast, to all private calls. It was real and pretty strenuous to us all, — his mother, too, — but the test came when there was a train to meet at mealtimes. Then it appeared pretty plainly that Pete's mother really regarded the garage business as bunk, or at any rate it was not as serious as his dinner!

Well, we business men held a directors' meeting and decided and announced that, hereafter, our garage would close from one to two P.M. But we sang our little song: 'Pete and Papa are wonderful, Mama and Anna are absurd.'

Mama, Anna, and many of our neighbors disapproved of this song. When we sang it together at a tea, women were shocked and some men wagged their funny old heads. 'How can you teach your son such nonsense!' they exclaimed — and if I explained that it does n't matter what you *teach* a child, that all that matters is what he *learns*, they did not understand me. My father and my grandfather would have understood perfectly, as their grandson and great-grandson did. Maybe the following incident will clear it all up.

One day Pete came to my study door and said that he had just killed a bear.

'Where?' I asked.

'Over there,' he waved.

'That's wonderful,' I said. 'A coincidence. I just killed ten bears.' He looked a bit dashed, but he inquired: —

'Where?'

'Over there,' I waved.

He looked so beaten that I rose and said: 'Come on, Pete, let's go and tell Mama.'

'Oh, no,' he protested, 'not Mama.'

'Ah, come on,' I urged, offering to take his hand. 'I'll do the talking.'

Very reluctantly, he put his hand in mine and we went into the house, up to his mother, who was busy (writing fiction).

'Mama,' I said, 'Pete killed a bear.'

Annoyed, she looked up at me and demanded why I encouraged the boy to lie like that.

'Oh, that's nothing,' I said. 'I just killed ten bears.'

'Oh, go away!' she exclaimed, in real irritation. 'You are both liars and I don't think it's funny.' And she actually pushed us.

We took hands again; we bear-killers, we liars, we slunk out of the house and sat down on the front steps, he at one side, I at the other, and we were silent a long time. I was wondering what was going on in the boy's head. At last he spoke.

'Daddy.'

'Yes, Pete.'

'Daddy, Pete and Papa are not wonderful.'

'No?'

'No. Mama is wonderful. Pete and Papa are absurd.'

Well, I took that. We got up, hand in hand; we walked about a bit in the garden till we were called to luncheon. Seated at table, I wanted to break the strain, so I said: 'Come on, Pete, let's say it,' and, with his grandfather's twinkle of the eye, he joined me in saying: 'Pete and Papa are wonderful,' and so forth.

He knew. You don't have to be careful with children, unless you have taken a pose and have to remember to keep it up; and even then . . .

III

My father made with me one serious mistake which I see parents about me making. He got himself somehow into the awkward position of an authority; I thought he knew and was right on everything — for a while. He did not pretend to righteousness or omniscience. He seemed to me as a boy to be fair, and he seems to me now, as a man, to have been either very modest or well aware of the danger there is of exposure

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for a father who has been idealized. Just the same, he was idealized. I suppose that he did what I see these other parents do; he probably answered impatiently and, therefore, thoughtlessly and positively the prattling questions of my early childhood, of that impressionable period of the first seven years. Anyway, when I became conscious and my father took me and my problems seriously, he was already my household god. And then — and then —

Among the many places out in the world to which I rode off alone on the pony he had given me was the State Fair grounds. Happening to turn in there of a spring morning, I saw some jockeys exercising a string of race horses. I joined them; they objected at first to the kid, but one of them — a colored boy named Smoke — said I could stay, and by and by I was accepted. The trainers found a use for me: to ride bareback their trotting horses. I decided to become a jockey. My mother discovered the secret first. I did not eat — not regularly. I would fast for a day or two, then break down and gobble. She complained, scolded, questioned. Mothers are awful. My father saved me. He bade her leave me alone and he observed me for a day or two, then he took me aside and asked me quietly, 'What is all this fasting for?' He was so 'nice and easy' about it that I told him all about me and the jockeys and the trainers; and how they said that 'if I kept my weight down I might be a winner.'

My father sat reflecting a long time, his way, before he answered, and his speech showed that he accepted my career on the turf absolutely. He began by advising me about fasting. I was n't to do it as I had been doing it: going without food, then eating too much. A better way was to eat moderately, choosing foods that I did not like and usually avoided, like vegetables, for instance, and holding to what he called my 'diet.' He talked about horses and horse racing, which he named the king of sports and the sport of kings. What struck me was that he knew all about the turf, as he knew all about everything. Also he spoke to my mother, so that she entered into the game — not enthusiastically; she made faces and tended to utter protests, but my daddy 'minded' them. He stopped her with that immortal wave of the hand which I see his grandson wave.

So I went on as a jockey apprentice to learn all about horses, racing, and riding, till the spring meets. We knew the horses entered for those races, which were good, which were best, and we had our favorites. Smoke had one in his stable that could beat anything in sight. Smoke loved, we all respected, I adored that horse, and when he ran, sure to win, he lost. Smoke 'pulled' him. I saw it from my perch under the wire. I saw the horse fight for the bit with Smoke, who fought back. I saw it all, and I learned that horse racing was n't on the level, that some races were 'fixed' to catch the 'suckers' and give the racing men and jockeys a chance to make some money. Smoke blamed the suckers — 'they spoil everything.' I blamed and I hated the suckers who spoiled everything.

I quit the track, I gave up the turf as a career, I ate my fill. My father noticed it, asked me why, but I could not tell him right away. Too painful. And besides, he must know what racing was. He invited me to go with him to several races, but I refused till some big business friends came to town and joined in asking me to 'Come on, boy, and see the sport.' It was too humiliating to enter with them at the main gate. I went in 'free' through the stable door the jockeys used, joined them on the grandstand where the despised public sat, the suckers. They were betting on the favorite in the next

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race and talking wisely about his condition and past performances. It seemed to me they were pretending to know some things that they did not know. I got up, ran down to the stables and my friends, Smoke and the rest. They were laughing about this race. It was fixed; the favorite was to lose, and I heard the name of the horse that was to win. Darting back to my father's party of superior grown-ups, I said, not too loud, that the favorite they were betting on would not win and I named the winner — who won. I knew; they did n't. Astonished, they asked me how I knew. I refused to tell them then. They were suckers. Of course most of them were; but my father? He asked me afterwards how I picked the winner and I told him then — all about horse racing. He was all right; he listened, reflected, believed, and he tried to save some of my illusions.

But — the tragedy of this little comedy, repeated in other departments of life as I was seeing it, was the discovery that my father did not know everything; he was not always right.

IV

Now, I recovered from this, from all these experiences. I saw that he did not pretend to know all, that he felt and could admit that he was often wrong and in doubt. It was only my infant idol that suffered, my idealization of my father, and — *and* myself. But that was enough.

When my son appeared on the scene, when he was a baby, I remembered the disappointment and distress of my young disillusionment and I determined to save him and *his* father from any such experience. The first time my father's grandson asked me a question, I said I did not know; and the next time, and the next. I have never known the answer. Sometimes I say, 'I don't know. Let's go and see.' So we find out things together. If that is not possible, if we can't see with our eyes what we want to know, I may say: 'I don't know, Pete, but I think it's — so.' Or I say, 'Grown-ups say it's so, but we don't really know.' Indeed, we have a saying, the boy and I, which we repeat often in unison: 'I think so, but I don't know,' or 'I don't know, but I think so.'

The theory of this skepticism is that the child has everything to learn for himself and, for us, not only what we don't know, but also — all over again — what we think we do know. And to enforce his self-reliance I seek cases where he and I can differ. He thinks his ball went over there where I saw it go; I think it went over here. We look here first, and Daddy is wrong. We look over there, and there it is. Pete was right — often.

I think that my father if he could observe us might wag his head over these exercises that have gone on for six years — during the unconscious, most sensitive period of his grandson's life. I don't know what my father would have thought when his grandson said the other day: —

'My daddy is always wrong. My mama is always right. And Pete? I am half right and half wrong.'

I don't know, but I think that my father would have sat silent a long time, reflecting, remembering, and then seen that his influence upon his grandson — through me — was both directly and indirectly his very own, his immortal self. And he would have been convinced if he saw what I saw: that Pete thought that on the whole, humanly and socially speaking, it was rather better to be wrong than right, or, at any rate, more amusing.

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THE 'ERRORS' OF TELEVISION

BY GILBERT SELDES

SOMETIME in the middle of 1938, television sets may be put on sale in the United States. The date is still a guess, but it is not unreasonable; it is the only guess made by experts in the field and they never use an earlier date; sometimes when a problem becomes difficult or an experimental programme shows up some weakness, the date is pushed farther ahead. As television will be, in effect, a combination of the radio and the moving picture, it has an exceptional importance; and since the early programmes of television will be based on the experiments now being made, the citizen may well begin to think about television now instead of neglecting it for twenty years as he neglected radio and the movies. Twenty years from now will be much too late for complaints.

There are three separate sets of problems in the launching of television: the problems of engineering, of financing, and of entertaining; and each of these will determine in part when television is to be started, for whose benefit, and with what materials.

I

About seven and a half million dollars have already been invested in experimental television and perhaps half a million will be spent annually before any income will appear. In return for this investment, the promoters have machinery which, they seem to believe, may be improved, but will not have to be fundamentally altered in order to give reasonable satisfaction. The potential buyer of a receiving set will not need to know the technical details of this machinery; he can be assured that any receiver he buys will give him the telecasts sent out by all the major systems of transmission. That is because the principal experiments now being made all use the same basic principle. In each one there is an apparatus usually called the 'scanner' which 'photographs' an object; in each one the lights and shades of the object are transformed into electronic impulses; these impulses pass through the air as those of ordinary radio do and the receiving apparatus turns them back into the highlights and shadows which compose a picture. Actually the picture is formed on the end of a cathode-ray tube in the receiving set and we see it reflected in a mirror which becomes on a small scale our moving-picture screen. The areas of light and shade are traced with great rapidity in a straight line as if an invisible pencil were making lighter or darker dots, and a delicate mechanism sends the pencil back to the beginning of the line at the right moment; on the screen, which is about seven inches by ten inches, four hundred and forty-one lines are drawn for each picture. These pictures follow each other so rapidly that, by the persistence of vision in the human eye, they seem to be moving.

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In the early days of television, the number of lines traced by the imaginary pencil was anywhere from thirty to three hundred and forty-three. With thirty lines, the resultant picture looked like a puzzle made up of white dots on a black background. At one hundred and eighty the picture had the kind of cross-hatched background familiar in the first newspaper photographs transmitted by wireless. The four hundred and forty-one line standard, which has been approved by the Federal Communications Commission, gives the clarity and sharp definition of the usual halftone illustration. Although telecasts observed this spring show that pictures tend to be distorted at top and bottom of the screen, the engineers do not believe that this is due to the limitation of the number of lines to four hundred and forty-one; for every increase in the number of lines, a disproportionately larger part of the available wave lengths must be given up, and the engineers are fairly well satisfied that the present standard will be satisfactory.

The differences between the major systems will become important to the consumer if television runs into the kind of patents litigation which disturbed the moving-picture industry for ten years. At present the principal experiments are being made by the Radio Corporation of America, utilizing the inventions of Zworykin, and by Philo Farnsworth, working out his inventions at the laboratories of the manufacturers of Philco radio sets. In various ways these two experimenters are on excellent terms. Philco is licensed under RCA patents; when RCA is ready for commercial television, it will undoubtedly use the National Broadcasting Company, which it owns; but NBC's chief rival, the Columbia Broadcasting System, is one of the principal customers of RCA for radio equipment. A patents fight does not therefore seem inevitable. Moreover, the Federal Government, which brushed aside all technicalities at the time of the World War and consolidated all the available information for radio broadcasting, may have considerable influence on television. Various government agencies are anxious to take over parts of the short-wave band on which television operates. (In Germany the whole business of television has disappeared from the public domain into the secret laboratories of the War Department.) If the promoters of television have to bid against Federal departments, they will in all probability attempt to make a united front.

The first question on which all the promoters might agree would be when and at what level of technical perfection television should be commercially offered. Mr. David Sarnoff, the President of Radio Corporation, has said, 'In the broadcasting of sight, transmitter and receiver must fit as lock and key.' This means that the moment receivers are sold transmitters cannot be altered or improved in certain fundamental respects, because if they were the receiver would be utterly worthless. There is a danger that television may be made rigid at the beginning when it should be most flexible, and this danger is all the greater if no sudden surprises from a rival need be anticipated. Because early receiving sets will cost about five hundred dollars, the producing companies will not dare to let them become rapidly obsolete; the method of yearly models will not apply until sets are actually in mass production. In this way the consumer will be protected, but it may be at the cost of continued improvement.

As a consumer, I can imagine another way of selling television sets, but I am not sure that it is practicable. Television could be offered to the public frankly as an experiment. The price of the receiver would be high and the

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amount of entertainment at the beginning would be limited, yet such a conditional invitation is a possibility. The buyer would be warned in advance that after a specific period the apparatus might be useless — that is, he would gamble; as a pioneer he would take his risk for the pleasure of being among the first to enjoy the new entertainment. This would make for flexibility and would give both the engineer and the promoter an additional period for experimentation; moreover it would remove early television from the dominance of the sponsor, who would naturally tend to freeze the system at a given level. In a sense there is a choice between giving a limited guarantee to the public and giving it to the sponsor. Each of these will pay back part of the investment in television, the public by buying sets and the sponsor by buying time on the air; each will wait upon the other; and the promoters will have to make delicate decisions.

II

The second series of problems, which I have called financial, rises from the relation between television and radio. In brief, the dilemma is this: the promoters of television dare not withhold it and at the same time they hardly dare promote it. All the leaders in the field are involved in the business of radio broadcasting or in the manufacture of radio sets, or both. In these enterprises the investment is many times greater than the already large investment in television experiments. Moreover, the commerce of America now rests in part on radio advertising; as business men themselves say, their factories are 'geared' to a level of production which would inevitably fall off if the power of radio advertising diminished. That is why almost every official statement about television is sure to contain the word 'supplementary.' Radio programmes will continue in undiminished splendor; they will improve; they will be dominant; and television will be offered 'as a supplementary entertainment.' No doubt this is largely true; there are technical reasons and financial reasons for the slow infiltration of telecasting. But the promoters are obviously uneasy. They know that the time will come when they will be trying to sell electric light bulbs and kerosene lamps over the same counter. The manufacturers now sell some two million radio sets a year, on the assumption that they are the very best sets on the market. Will the customer be as willing to buy if he knows that a television set, which includes a perfect radio set, is also on the market?

The quick collapse of the silent moving picture haunts the promoters of television; and the calm assurance of their own technicians is ominous. An engineer was taking me through a television studio and referred to his own post as the 'monitor room.' When I asked him what the word meant, he replied: 'Oh, that's just a hangover *from the old radio days.*' Engineers in television are notably cautious in expression, but one cannot talk to them for five minutes without knowing that to them television is the natural and inevitable fulfillment of radio, and radio is only an outline to be filled in by television. Once it is launched, the promoters will have a hard time keeping it supplementary.

At first they will undoubtedly send out separate programmes, but after a sufficient number of sets have been sold they are going to create programmes in which, they hope, the audible portion is interesting enough to stand by itself. I seriously doubt whether the effort will be successful. If we go to a moving picture and the sound track fails for a minute or two while a race between police and bandits is going on, the

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movement on the screen may be sufficiently interesting; but if the picture faded and the dialogue continued, even if the dialogue were by a master, who would listen? There is a sound and simple principle which will defeat the attempt to make a single programme do for television and radio: either the blind listener will feel that he is missing something important, or, if he does not, the listener who also has television will not be seeing anything important.

III

So the problem of promotion slips almost imperceptibly into the problem of programmes. If we assume that the programme directors will somehow free themselves from their obligations to radio, we shall find three separate elements available for telecasting. The first is any actual event at the moment it occurs — a parade, a football game, a strike. The second is a dramatic sketch or a song-and-dance number transmitted from the studio. The third is any moving-picture film.

Almost all the experts in the field are sure that the first of these, the telecasting of events directly from their scene of action, will eventually form the staple of the television programmes. The British Broadcasting Corporation, which has a regular television service of an hour every afternoon and an hour every evening, has experimented in this field. It has a ramp leading to an outside terrace from which it can telecast any event occurring in that particular street. But both the engineering and the financial problems of the newsreel side of television are still largely unsolved. For instance, the cost of wiring alone, for the Coronation ceremonies, was estimated at five dollars a yard.

For a telecast from the studio, radio broadcasting has to transform itself virtually into moving-picture making with powerful lights and high make-up for the actors. Until recently, it was also necessary to build up scenery — walls, façades of buildings, or whole rooms; now an ingenious method of faking these properties has been devised which will reduce the cost of studio telecasting considerably. Nevertheless the expense is great, and most of the people available for doing the work well are in the movie studios; and when all the labor has been done the man at the receiver sees exactly what he would see if a movie had been made of the same action and telecast to him. Telecasting movies is at present the cheapest and most varied of the three elements. The film is run off before the scanner and all the problems of controlling and governing the object to be telecast are mechanically and perfectly solved. The moving picture is, in fact, so adaptable that it may be used as an intermediate step in telecasting actual events. The highly developed mobile camera with wide-angled lenses can cover a wider area than the scanner in television, and it has been found possible to photograph, develop, and fix the film, ready for telecasting, in less than thirty seconds; and an ingenious method for delaying the accompanying sound of any event so that it will exactly synchronize with the picture has already been found. (I am indebted for this information to a little book, *Television*, written by M. G. Scroggie, a British engineer.)

Unfamiliar with the techniques of the stage and the film studio, and unprepared for another huge investment in men and material, the makers of television programmes will naturally turn to the ordinary moving picture, which will probably be as prominent in early television as music was in early broadcasting, the film instead of the phonograph record. And here we strike at the heart of the difference between the two forms, because listening to music and looking at a moving picture

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absorb our energies in quite different ways. It is a difference in the degree of attention. This is so obvious as to be hardly worth mentioning, but because it is obvious we are only aware of it in extreme cases. For instance, you may like or dislike to have the radio going while you are driving your car, but to keep looking at a television screen on your dashboard will be in practice impossible.

Yet within radio broadcasting itself there are degrees of listening, and almost imperceptibly the demands upon our attention have been varied. I do not know whether the sponsors have ever worked out the psychological implications of the two kinds of programmes. The sponsor who offers a good popular band knows perfectly well that people will play bridge or read the newspaper while the music is going on and expects them to snap to attention when the commercial talk is uttered in a commanding voice — that is, he is counting on contrast. The sponsor of a gag comedian, on the other hand, demands sustained and close attention. Comedians and their gag writers put down 'four "sock" gags a minute' as a minimum for keeping a programme going well. And this means that you cannot divert your attention for a moment if you want to get the point of the joke. However commanding the advertising may be, it cannot compete with the comedy itself; the advertiser must count on the fact that his listeners are already attentive and will therefore continue to be. Actually, in many cases, a bit of music is played and the commercial announcement follows this slight relaxation of attention. In other cases the 'plug' is worked into the comedy. But the strain of listening is totally different from that of merely hearing.

The image on the television receiver makes no such compromise. The thing moves; it demands complete attention. You cannot walk away from it, you cannot turn your back on it, and you cannot do anything else except listen while you are looking. At first guess the sponsor who goes before the scanner will imagine that this is the long-desired ideal, the conquest at last of indifference or casual interest. He will think of the television programme as a feature film with a commercial plug added. I suspect that he will be wrong. The physical conditions of the moving-picture house will not be duplicated. At home we shall not be compelled to sit through a dull episode in silence, hoping for an exciting one to follow. We will, in short, look into the mirror of television only so long as the movement upon it is of surpassing interest.

In the experiments I have seen, under 'theatre' conditions, only actual newsreels, in which each episode ran for not more than two minutes, seemed short enough. I, who have listened to half a dozen songs in succession on the radio, found that a second chorus to a brief and attractive popular song was tiresome when I had also to see the singer and her accompanist. The same thing was true of a quite excellent dancing act. In fact, the only element in the skillfully varied programmes which did not seem to me overlong was an old movie 'short' by Robert Benchley, and this was a tribute to Mr. Benchley's humor and not to anything that occurred on the mirror screen.

I put down brevity as a first qualification, although it is possible that as we grow more used to television we will endure longer exposures. A parallel in the development of the talking picture may be helpful. Talk made a supplementary demand on the attention of the movie audience, and because directors overemphasized it they slowed down the moving picture while endless dialogue was uttered. It took several years before dialogue was put in its proper place and action restored to its

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dominant position. In the change from radio to television the proportions are reversed: it is not a secondary but a primary demand on the attention that is being offered, not a slower medium but a far more rapid one which is being added. Because radio has been addressed exclusively to the ear it has been comparatively slow-paced. Speakers have made their points carefully; comedians build up their important gags with almost maddening delays and often repeat the 'wow' in case it has been missed in its first explosive splendor. Whenever a physical object is an essential to a dramatic sketch, radio has to 'establish' it in the minds of the listeners and to keep referring to it so that it shall not be lost to the mind's sight. The moment television is added, the dynamics of a programme must be changed and the rate of presentation must be accelerated. Trial and error, particularly error, will determine the proportions of this change, but the basic error would be not to know that so far as television is successful the degree of attention has gone up in a geometric progression and that therefore the duration of attention must correspondingly go down.

IV

I am thinking of the pleasures of a programme and of the principles on which it should be based, but my ideas would be in a vacuum if I did not also consider the advertising which will inevitably accompany the programmes. It is in this department that television may make its most serious errors, because while the radio stations may know what is desirable and may study psychology and æsthetics, the last word is still the sponsor's word. The commercial sponsors in radio have seldom received proper credit for their accomplishments. They took radio away from centralized authority; they took it away from the pedantic and from the too serious enthusiast for instruction; and by the process of exhausting their own materials they compelled radio to have an infinite variety. In all these things they may have gone too far, but their direction was right. Oddly enough, it was in their own field, and not in æsthetics, that they made their greatest mistake. They chose between two principles in advertising and chose the wrong one. The principle of associating your product with something that is agreeable is the one they abandoned; the principle that repetition makes reputation is the one they overemphasized. And now in television they not only can mention their product, but in most cases can actually show it to you: the very package of face cream or breakfast food which you can buy tomorrow and for the wrapper of which — plus ten cents in postage — your child can get a drinking mug (also made visible).

Before the sponsors plunge into this new field, they should take thought of what happened in the movies. For thirty years efforts have been made to use the moving picture commercially; for thirty years the effort has failed. The moving picture can be used for propaganda; it can advertise the delights of flying, but not the delights of flying in a particular kind of plane; of drinking milk, but not milk from any particular herd of cows. Stubborn resistance against the injection of advertising is now ingrained in the moving-picture audience. Although television is not the same thing as the moving picture, it will appear to be so nearly the same thing that the spectator will apply to it the same standards. Television will make advertising too emphatic — too emphatic even for the advertiser's good.

Let me offer an example. Last winter I heard a dramatized plug on the air. It began with motorcar noises, the screeching of brakes, the tough

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voice of a motorcycle cop threatening to arrest the speeder — and then the discovery that the violator of the law was none other than the charming young woman who a week before had recommended to the officer a certain hand lotion which, in those raw and gusty days, had prevented his hands from becoming chapped. I am aware that this sounds like a burlesque of radio advertising; I not only vouch for its accuracy, but feel sure that every reader has listened to something equally absurd. Set before you on the television screen, the traditional 'burly policeman' (and one may be sure that the tradition would be respected) showing his gentle and unchapped hands would be howlingly funny and the mind would drift off to the secondary and very disturbing thought that a traffic officer who failed to make a necessary arrest was an even greater menace to society than a reckless driver. The image on the screen, being of such high potentiality, would destroy what the spoken word could create.

If the advertisers do not retreat to the principle which they have abandoned, — that of associating their product with something desirable, — if they insist upon their bang-bang emphasis, they will reach the zone of indifference within a short time and speed to the zone of hostility soon after. It is to be noted that modifications of the advertising technique have occurred within the past few years and that the method of 'kidding' the commodity has robbed the announcer's plug of some of its horrors. But for years the advertising was disturbing, tasteless, overinsistent, and even downright offensive. To me, a manufacturer of nothing but a buyer of many things, a telecast advertisement would be most effective if in the course of, perhaps, a dramatic sketch a character made use of an easily recognized cigarette or coffee and, without even mentioning its name, expressed satisfaction. This would divide the emphasis by five, let us say, on the assumption that the attention in television as compared to broadcasting was multiplied by five. But I would consider myself a hopeless victim of wish fulfillment if I believed for a moment that such a restrained standard of advertising would prevail.

V

Let us assume, however, that radio advertising will be intelligent or that we shall become hardened to it; of what will our studio entertainment then consist? The experimental programme makers already know that the public has become accustomed to the disembodied voice; the public gets some sense of personality over the air. Handsome as I am sure all news commentators are, the sight of them reading their comments, which audiences generally imagine are impromptu, would not be a particular gain. It is ungallant to say so, but quite possibly some of our vocalists are not as beautiful as their voices; and one man who advertises a hair tonic lives in mortal terror of the coming of television, because he is almost totally bald.

In broadcasting circles, news commentary, advice to the lovelorn, instruction in any subject, and even political oratory are lumped together as 'talk programmes.' Following that shrewd classification, I postpone for a moment considering the rest of the average radio programme and note that statesmen may not find television an unmixed blessing. There has been an advantage in the sourceless voice. It has been not-human, even superhuman. In the newsreels Father Coughlin, for instance, lost much of the authority he exerted over the air; Huey Long, on the whole, gained; Mr. Roosevelt, in my opinion, loses a little, but I do not believe that this is a universal judg-

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ment. But in any case the politicians will fall under the law of compression which I suggested above. An actual audience in a stadium or convention hall enjoys the contagion of the mob and will sit for an hour and clap hands and throw hats in the air, but when only two or three are gathered together the spectacle of an orating man will not be nearly so absorbing. We shall be thrilled by the spectacle of a nominating convention, but before a debate or an ordinary radio speech is telecast the astute politician will want to be sure that his audience will have something agreeable, but not distracting, to look at — which, in nine cases out of ten, eliminates the speaker himself.

The greater part of sponsored broadcasting at the present time is divided between the dramatic sketch, the comedian, and the popular orchestra, each of these used separately or in combination. Obviously the dramatic sketch stands to gain most by the addition of sight — to gain most and to require the most energetic overhauling. The moment a sketch is made visible, it will require settings, properties, and actors in place of simple readers from manuscript. And again, because of the concentration of attention, the momentum will have to be accelerated.

At present, all of a fifteen-minute programme can concern itself with the question of whether a young girl's party dress makes her look old enough to compete with her sisters. The famous breach of promise suit in 'Amos 'n' Andy' was stretched out over a period of months; the entire technique is that of the comic strip, each broadcast limited to a minute incident. But the moment these things are seen as well as heard, they come into competition with the moving picture, which in some sixty minutes — the time of only four broadcasts — develops half a dozen amusing or illuminating incidents, three or four major episodes, and at least one dramatic climax. Successful sketches on the air have lived by cumulative interest; any single quarter hour of the Goldbergs or Amos 'n' Andy might be tiresome, but the listeners have memories of the past and definite anticipations of action in the future, involving characters in whom they are interested. That is why the sketches can afford to be slow. The new mechanism destroys that privilege because it renders the characters completely and instantaneously and must launch them into a decisive action which, I suspect, will have to be fairly complete in itself. The serial dramatic sketch may therefore prove unsuitable for television, and in its place we shall probably have the more compact condensation of plays which now usually runs for half an hour on the air.

About the comedian it is frankly difficult to say anything definite. Obviously the pun, which is the recurrent staple of radio comedy, gains nothing whatever through vision. The fantastic imaginings of Stoopnagle and Budd, by far the most distinguished of radio entertainers, lie in a realm of fancy which a Walt Disney or an intelligible Dali might illustrate, but merely to see them talking would not be an advantage. The old stage comedians such as Wynn and Pearl and Cantor would be as good as they ever were and would present, in substance, vaudeville sketches.

Ever since the days of the phonograph the public has become accustomed to listening to music without seeing the performer. The talking picture has reversed the process, but the intelligent musical film has seldom used its orchestras for more than a background and has even thrown in a complementary action when songs are being sung; what most people remember about Stokowski's work in *The Big Broadcast of 1937* is the movement of his hands. Radio jazz bands are now full of galvanic comedians, and their

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antics could be telecast with some advantage, but I suspect that television will bring to the foreground, not the orchestras, but dancers who will work with them. The great opportunity television offers is to the one art which radio has never been able to encompass — the art of dancing, particularly the ballet.

VI

I have been discussing so far the elements of the usual commercial programme, but it is reasonable to assume that the poor relation of the air, the unsponsored programme, will also appear in television. The great fault of educational programmes so far has been not so much that they were too serious or too informative: they simply were not as skillfully and entertainingly presented as the sponsored material. Clearly a programme of information and ideas can gain even more by television than a programme of jokes and music. Here is a blackboard for the mathematician, a laboratory for the chemist, a picture gallery for the art critic, and possibly a stage upon which the historian can reënact the events of the past, or the news commentator the headlines of to-day. Moving-picture exhibitors now use travelogues and scientific films to vary their programmes; commercial radio has not found any way to adapt the same material. Yet underneath the obvious tendencies of current programmes one can discern a slight inclination toward using educational material; it comes close to the surface in the 'cavalcade' programmes dramatizing various periods of history.

I think it probable that a skillful adapter might break through the timidity of the sponsors and create an educational programme of considerable commercial value, especially if he offered such a programme in one of those recurrent moments when sponsors are panic-stricken because all the familiar types of programme have grown stale and they are casting about for something new, something to set such a vogue as was created by the comedians or by the amateur hours. Television will at least have one advantage: the educational film short will certainly be used, and, as it is often very well made, it may take the blight of futility from the educational programme. Many of the significant interests of intelligent human beings have been stuffed away into the dark corners of radio programmes; it would be a pleasant irony if television brought them to light and proved that they were valuable for commercial purposes.

The moving picture will not merely supply its ready-made films for telecasting. As the new entertainment becomes more expert it will demand films expressly made for television, and presently it will have a profound effect upon all our moving pictures. I confess that there is a great deal of speculation in all of this, but I am convinced that because television will be shown in the home to single individuals or very small groups, because it will be sponsored and therefore each fragment of it must be comparatively short, the tempo of the dramatic or musical numbers will be rapid; just as the movies are more compact than radio, television will approach its points and its climaxes with far less lost motion than the movies now do. And no matter how often people are told that they must not compare the two forms, they will compare them, and the movies will have to cut out their waste material in order to compete. It would be a good thing. They have become dignified and a little lethargic in their methods; they will have to be energized all over again.

This will be particularly painful to the movie makers who are now drowning themselves in a sea of color, appar-

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ently persuaded that if the face of Marlene Dietrich and her hair and her clothes are in a series of brilliant hues (especially her face), the whole moving picture can stand still while the audience enjoys the pleasure merely of looking. In almost every case, so far, color has slowed up the movies. Yet color will not save the movies from the competition of television. It will be sad news to Hollywood to learn that as long as eight years ago color television was actually demonstrated; and Mr. Scroggie says that, although the difficulties are great, they are statistical rather than instrumental. So, if the invasion of color conquers the movies, it will only temporarily make them different from television. And once the movies recover, as they did from their temporary surrender to the talking mechanism, the sharpness and brevity of a television drama will make the ordinary talking moving picture seem as slow-going as a play by Clyde Fitch.

VII

In order to simplify the problems of television, I have written as if television would be launched immediately on coast-to-coast networks. The chances are ten to one that early television will be regional and not national. For technical reasons, not yet fully understood, telecast impulses begin to fade at the optical horizon line; to increase the range, the sending apparatus is usually placed at the top of a high building, but even from the Empire State the images travel some forty miles and then are lost. The cost of picking up these electronic signals and rebroadcasting them would be prohibitive until television is virtually as popular as radio is to-day. Moreover, there is a good commercial reason for encouraging regional activity, and that is the difference in time between the Pacific and Atlantic seaboards. The relentless demand of television to be attended to will make network telecasting commercially wasteful. Regional telecasting will favor local stations and possibly encourage experiments both by the programme makers and by the sponsors. Considering the complicated problems which must be solved, the difficulty of creating a fully developed national system of television at one stroke is actually a blessing.

And the best of the blessing is, of course, that the effect of television on radio will be so gradual that we may be able to preserve whatever in radio is desirable. In a study made by Malcolm M. Willey and Stuart A. Rice, over one hundred and fifty separate effects of the radio were listed, and under many of these general headings ten or more detailed items appeared. Because of radio, more of us took setting-up exercises in the morning, with possible improvement in our health; old songs were revived, as new ones quickly exhausted their popularity. Those who could not read found a new interest; oratory was restored to its ancient glory in Presidential campaigns; the difference between the city and the country was made less, vaudeville artists got jobs, book sales increased; farmers knew the price paid for stock and grain in Chicago and Minneapolis; newspapers for the first time had a rival in both of their important functions, giving news and advertising goods. Radio has been used for directing traffic during holiday jams when motorists were warned of points of congestion and advised to detour; millions of people, totally indifferent to social movements and international affairs and totally unhabituated to reading about such things, have become aware of them through news broadcasts and commentary; hundreds of millions of people were auditors at the drama of the abdication of King Edward VIII.

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So radio touches our lives at every point. It is desirable for us to know what price we have paid for the creation of this incomparable engine of social influence: we have certainly created a habit of almost indiscriminate, almost apathetic listening; through the air has come a really incalculable number of stupidities; much that is trite and tasteless comes with what is intelligent and bright. A critic of society would have a delicate job to determine how far radio has corrupted and how far improved the public taste, and the very existence of a power so great as that of radio seems menacing to many observers. The high-minded do not like to face the actual situation in radio, which is that all of its desirable effects are based on the habit of listening which was created largely by programmes trivial and banal in themselves. In countries with highly centralized authority it is possible that people listen to the radio because what they hear is important; and the extreme form is obligatory listening as it is practised in Germany. In a democratic country the emphasis is on the other side: radio is important because people listen to it, even when it is trivial; the audience which listened to the radio debate on the Supreme Court was created in the first place by Ed Wynn, Rudy Vallee, Amos 'n' Andy, and Kate Smith.

This unforeseen result, the creation of an audience which can be influenced to political action, is the thing that makes radio programmes important and justifies all our speculations about television. For the audience which television will create will be more attentive and, if properly handled, more suggestible even than the audience of radio. The question we are allowed to ask is whether all of radio's errors have to be repeated by television. Considering the advances made both in radio and in the movies, cannot television start off at their highest level instead of going back to where they began? The tendency of most new forms of entertainment is to take over the second-rate from an earlier type: as the silent movies took over melodrama from the stage, as radio took over the dialect comedian from vaudeville. The practical reason is that these second-rate elements are familiar and commercially dependable; the entertainment which adapts them to its own uses purges its older rivals but has to spend a long time rising to their level. It would be a great thing if television could from the start combine the best of the two forms of entertainment which ultimately, I believe, it will supersede.

And yet I have a feeling that the most important thing for television is to make sure of its own popularity. Like the moving picture and the radio, television would act against its own nature if it did not try to be virtually a universal entertainment. I see no reason for thinking that this universality is any bar to excellence. Commenting on a rough division of the arts which I once made, Professor Mortimer J. Adler has recently written: 'Great and lively art have this in common: they are able to please the multitude.' Professor Adler offers 'the work of Walt Disney as lively art that also reaches greatness, a degree of perfection in its field which surpasses our best critical capacity to analyze and which succeeds at the same time in pleasing children and simple folk.'

At least twenty years of popular work which was not great, which was often offensive to reasonable taste and of doubtful effect on the people, preceded those comparatively few works in the movies which can stand beside Disney's masterpieces. One of the reasons for this long delay was the indifference of the intelligent public. Perhaps a more alert and critical citizenry will help television more rapidly over its difficulties.

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FIRE IN THE GALLEY STOVE

BY CAPTAIN WILLIAM OUTERSON

I

THE ship *Unicorn* loitered to the westward, running large with a gentle breeze from the south. In the light of the brilliant moon her decks gleamed whitely; aloft, sly shadows played among her sails and spars. Overside, the quiet sea murmured as she passed.

Mister Mergam stood on the weather side of the poop, staring sourly ahead and seeing though not perceiving the beauty of the night. His keen ears caught the various sounds of ship and sea and wind, and his trained mind recognized them automatically, especially the soft thud of the rudder as the sea touched it, now on one side and now on the other. It was a simple sound, near and familiar, relentless as fate and sounding a note of caution, obscurely ominous, as if the voice of the helm attempted to warn him against any lack of vigilance. In this particular morning watch it gave him that impression, not because he was feeling down and defeated, since he had felt that way for years, but owing to his mood of sour rebellion, which had now reached a climax. He hated the empty plains of the sea and the narrow rounds of sailing-ship duties, but had to endure them because he could not make a living ashore.

Through all his years of roving, even on nights like this, he had remained blind to the beauty of the sea, and now his feeling toward it had settled into weary hatred. He knew its effects of blended color, its wide gradations of sound and action, the tireless charm of a sailing ship's effortless movement, the quality of silent distance and the wonder of the skies. Dimly at times, in moments of rare emotion, he had caught a glimpse of the mystic hand that beckons beyond the horizon and felt for a little while the fated urge of the wanderer. But that was in the beginning, long ago when he had first gone to sea, and he had forgotten it.

The lee side of the deck, to starboard, abounded in shadows cast by the moon. Under the mainsail a dark blotch extended from the half deck to the main hatch, and a bright space lay between that and the forward house. Observing this with his customary dull disinterest in details not requiring action, he watched the shadow thrown by the foot of the mainsail, backing and filling in the languid breeze. Raising his eyes from the deck to the sail, he suddenly stiffened and gazed unseeing in front of him as he felt an unusual movement of the hull, a strange shaking that startled him because it was outside of all his former experience. The whole ship, hull and spars and rigging, trembled eerily, and all the gear aloft made a weird clatter. He had never known any ship to move like this, and as he stood wondering what had caused it the skipper came hurriedly from the companion and halted beside him.

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'What was that?' he demanded nervously.

'I don't know, sir,' Mister Mergam answered. 'I've never felt anything like it until now, so I would n't know what it was.'

'You don't know!' exclaimed the skipper. 'You're here on deck in charge of the ship and something scrapes along her side — a derelict, more than likely — and you don't know what it was! You don't know.' The skipper waved his hands helplessly. 'Why don't you know? Did n't you see anything? Invisible things don't shake a ship like that. It must have been something big enough to be seen. Were you asleep?'

'No, sir, I was n't asleep. I was wider awake than you are now, attending to my job, and I saw nothing. There was nothing to be seen. The lookout did n't see anything, or he would 've reported it, and the man at the wheel did n't see anything, either.'

'The man at the wheel,' the skipper repeated unpleasantly. 'How do you know he did n't see anything? It is n't his job to see things and report them. He's there to steer the ship, not to keep lookout.'

The mate turned away sullenly and approached the man at the wheel.

'Did you see what shook her a minute ago, Thomson?' he inquired.

'No, sir,' Thomson answered. 'I did n't see nothin'. I looked astern after she stopped shakin' an' there was n't nothin' in sight.'

'You heard what he said, sir,' Mister Mergam remarked to the skipper in a tone of meagre triumph. 'There was nothing in sight.'

'Aye, I heard him,' Captain Garton returned impatiently. 'What do you suppose it could have been? Possibly a submerged derelict.'

'No, sir, I don't think so. It was n't the sort of shock any kind of a derelict would give. I've been in collision with a derelict, and it was something entirely different. This was strong, but soft and trembly. A derelict would grind and scrape along her side and make enough noise to wake the dead.'

'I suppose you're right,' the skipper admitted unwillingly. He moved away from the mate and stood with his hands on the poop rail staring at the sea ahead, a tall man, gaunt and irascible from chronic dyspepsia due to overeating and lack of exercise, tired of life and hating everybody, including himself. His excessively bright eyes wandered fretfully along the deck on the weather side, which was lit by the moon except for an edge of shadow here and there, and he glanced at the leech of the mainsail. Something attracted his attention then, and he looked over on the port bow. A startled exclamation broke from him and he threw up his arm in swift apprehension, pointing urgently.

'Hey, Mister Mergam!' he cried. 'What's that?'

The mate looked in the direction indicated by the captain's finger and noted a lifting of the sky line, an effect he had often observed while approaching a high coast from the sea, though this was not quite so well defined. He stared in silence and without understanding, disregarding the impatient questions of the captain until he arrived at the conclusion that the elevation ahead was a great wave approaching the ship at high speed. In the moonlight he could see its steep unbroken slope shining like bright metal and rushing toward them, and he was disturbed by the thought that it might sweep the decks clean.

'It's a big wave, sir,' he said at last in faint excitement.

'Yes, it is,' the skipper agreed. 'It could n't be anything else. And it explains the shaking of the ship a few minutes ago. There's been an upheaval of the sea bottom, a submarine

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earthquake, and when the sea bottom shook, the sea shook with it. The sea floor hereabouts has risen nearly two thousand feet during the past twenty years.'

'Tidal wave on the port bow, sir,' the lookout reported belatedly. He had been uncertain what name to give it, or whether to make any report about it, since waves of any size are not usually reported aboard ships at sea. They take them as they come.

'Aye, aye,' replied Mister Mergam. 'Close all ports forrid.'

They could see the forms of the men moving about on their bare feet as they carried out this order, scattering silently and passing among the shadows from the sails on the foremast. The ports were closed in a little while, and the men thought they ought to shut all the doors, but before they could begin to do this the big wave rolled up like the side of a mountain.

The skipper and the mate watched it come, not expecting any particular trouble from it, whatever its size, since ships are built to ride the seas in all weathers and conditions, and the wave was approaching from a favorable direction, about two points on the weather bow. As it drew nearer and revealed its enormous size, its smooth crest towering loftily above the level of the sea, the two officers began to feel doubtful. They could hardly expect the ship to ride dry over such a mass of water as that, so abruptly sloped and moving so swiftly. When it reached the bows of the *Unicorn*, she gave a mighty heave and lifted her head in a gallant effort to climb the watery height, but she could not rise swiftly enough. Halfway up, her bowsprit and cutwater drove into it, and it broke over her, coming down on the decks with a solid crash that seemed to beat her under the sea. It swept over the forecastle head and rolled along the main deck in an avalanche, burying the houses far under and foaming against the masts as high as the foot of the courses. Rolling over the poop a fathom deep, it submerged the skipper, the mate, and the man at the wheel. They held on grimly, and in a few seconds the wave passed on.

The water sluiced off the decks into the calm sea, and soon all was normal again, save that the galley fire was black out, the morning coffee was ruined, and all the pots and pans were adrift in eighteen inches of salt water. Both forecastles were flooded, because the watch on deck, having been given barely enough time to close the ports, had not been able to shut the doors, and the watch below came spluttering out, cursing the other blokes for not having sense enough to do such things without waiting for orders.

'Call yourselves sailors,' they sneered malevolently. 'You ain't got sense enough to tighten your belts when your pants are slippin' down. Nurses is what you need.' They raved back and forth till somebody struck out and the forward deck became a tumbled scene of fighting sailors, cursing and mauling each other but inflicting no serious injuries. Like a pack of sportive demons in the shadows of the moon they rolled about the main deck as far aft as the main hatch, locked in fierce embraces of sound and fury.

The skipper and the mate stood on the poop watching the brawl, and a light came into Mister Mergam's eye. Extracting a heavy teakwood belaying pin from the taffrail, he swung it gently up and down, almost lovingly, holding it loosely in his right hand.

'I'd better put a stop to that,' he suggested to the skipper.

'No,' said Captain Garton. 'They won't hurt each other too much, and a little exercise will do them good. They've had it too easy this passage.'

Mister Mergam seemed disappointed by this decision, but he obediently replaced the pin in the rail and continued

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to watch the waning battle on the forward deck. Before long, the rage of the men abated and they separated two by two. Returning to their respective forecastles, they found that the water had drained out through the scupper holes, so the starboard watch lit their pipes and turned in to smoke while falling asleep. In the galley the cook cursed tidal waves and everything else as he gathered up his pots and pans and relit the fire in the stove after cleaning out the mess of sodden coals. It was now half-past four, and morning coffee — the most welcome event of the day to seafaring men — was due at two bells, therefore he must hurry. He would have a fresh brew ready in time if it could be done.

II

The skipper felt better after witnessing the fight between the watches, and he smiled for the first time in weeks as he listened to the reeking obscenities of the cook. There was something reckless and defiant in his piercing blasphemies that pleased the old man, who suffered a great deal from indigestion. But he soon became aware of the chill from his wet clothing and turned toward the companion with a sigh.

'Keep a sharp lookout, Mister,' he said to the mate as he started down to the cabin. 'We don't want any more tidal waves.'

'Very good, sir,' Mister Mergam replied, swearing under his breath. The skipper's remark seemed to imply that he was to blame for tidal waves.

'Damned old fool,' he muttered. 'He did n't even know the difference between a collision with a derelict and an earthquake shock.'

In the port forecastle the men of the watch were changing into dry dungarees and discussing after their fashion the events of the morning.

'That was a big sea,' said one.

'Aye, it was, but I've seen bigger off the Horn,' old Charlie declared.

'You never seen a bigger one anywheres, Charlie. You must of dreamt it.'

'This old hooker is full of bad luck.'

'So she is. She ain't had a lucky day since we left port.'

'When d'ya think coffee will be ready?'

'Ask the cook. Mebbe he knows.'

'I give Snooky in the sta'bo'd watch a coupla black eyes.'

'Take a squint at yer own.'

'The skipper's crazy.'

'Naw, he ain't crazy. He's sick. He oughta stay ashore.'

'Say! Did ya feel that? What the hell was that?'

On the quiet poop Mister Mergam stood with feet apart, glancing listlessly at the sky line from time to time, casting his eyes aloft at the towering sails, surveying the deck, and watching the play of shadows born of the moon. The color of the sea had changed, and it no longer gleamed with the purple blue of deep water. As they were not within two hundred miles of the Grand Bank he surmised that the disturbance on the sea bottom had sent up clouds of ooze that imparted a dull hue to the water. While considering this, turning it over in his mind with slow interest, he felt the ship quiver again to a sudden shock, altogether different from the first. It felt as if a floating body, soft and enormously heavy, had come to rest against the bottom of the ship, and he went swiftly to the taffrail to peer intently over the side. At the same time he noticed the men of the watch running silently to the main rail forward, where they also stared down at the sea. Evidently they had felt the shock. He had just finished his casual observance of them when the skipper erupted on the poop again, very much annoyed.

'What was that, Mister Mergam?'

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he demanded in his usual exasperated tone. 'That was no earthquake shock. Something hit her that time — you can't deny it. Something actual and material struck against her bottom.'

'Yes, sir. I'm not denying it. Something certainly hit her then, and I'm looking to see what it was, but there's nothing in sight.'

'Nothing in sight,' the skipper repeated. 'Nothing in sight. What in the name of all the mysteries is happening to this ship, anyhow? All sorts of things going on, and nobody knows anything about it!'

There came another soft, heavy shock, followed by others at short intervals.

'My God!' the skipper whispered, staring fearfully down at the muddy sea. More and more of the things, a whole crowd of them, monsters of some horrible sort, clamped along her keel, driven up from the bottom of the sea by the disturbance down there! 'What are they? Can you tell me that, Mister Mergam?'

'No, sir, I can't,' the mate replied uneasily.

They stared at each other in the light of the sinking moon, two perturbed and bewildered men suspecting some lurking danger.

'The wheel's jammed, sir!' cried Thomson. 'I can't move it.'

The skipper and the mate turned and stared at the man, watching his strenuous but unavailing efforts to move the wheel.

'She's lost headway, sir,' said Mister Mergam, looking over the side again. 'She's standing still.'

'You're quite right,' the captain agreed in a different tone of voice, low and troubled. 'These big brutes clinging to her bottom have stopped her, and one of them has clamped itself across the rudder. Whatever they are down there, they're keeping out of sight. Ah! There's another. That one struck forrid under the bows. There must be a lot of them.'

The man at the wheel, peering at the timepiece in the binnacle, saw that it was five o'clock and made two bells. Forward on the forecastle head, the man on lookout struck the ship's bell twice, two measured strokes that boomed and lingered about the shadowy decks. Placid now, and smoking a short clay pipe as black as ebony, the cook, who had flaming red hair and hailed from Glasgow, thrust his head through the galley doorway and asked what the hell was wrong now. The men strung along the rail told him they did n't bloody well know what was wrong, but if he would hurry with the coffee they would tell him as soon as they found out.

'If there's anither tidal wave comin', give us a shout so's I can close the doorrs and the porrts,' the cook requested.

'How about coffee?' they inquired, turning from the rail to observe him with the bantering regard that sailors bestow on sea cooks.

'It'll be ready in aboot ten meenits,' he promised them.

In a little less time than that he beat with a ladle on the bottom of an empty pan, making a racket that might have been heard or felt by the beasts along the keel, and the men left the rail to fetch their hook-pots from the forecastle. They were puzzled and a trifle scared and had little to say to each other, though they had chattered enough when those queer shocks had been felt. Some of them thought whales had rubbed their backs against the hull, but others argued that this would not have stopped the ship's headway. There must be a lot of big soft beasts hanging on to her, scared up from the depths by the earthquake down there that had caused the tidal wave, or the ship would n't be standing still the way she was. In silence they went one by one to

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the galley door and waited in line for their pots of coffee. Charlie was first. He stood at the door holding his hook-pot inside, to be filled with a ladleful of the stuff the cook called coffee, dipped from a boiler on the stove.

III

The skipper and the mate still waited at the taffrail for a sight of the things from the deep, and the long inaction had begun to affect their nerves.

'If we could only see them, and find out what they are,' muttered the captain, 'we might be able to decide on some plan of action. But how can we fight against invisible things of unknown nature!' He paced back and forth along a short path between the taffrail and the standard binnacle, frowning impatiently, clenching and opening his hands nervously.

Mister Mergam had glanced forward at the sound of the cook's gong, and he watched the men as they came out of the forecastle and went to the galley door to await their turn for coffee. The first man in line received his coffee and started for the fore hatch, where he intended to sit while drinking it, and he did not see the long slender tentacle that quirted over the rail above his head and waved here and there seeking what it might find. It found old Charlie as he reached the fore hatch, concealed from his watchmates by the corner of the forward house, wrapped itself round his neck with a strangling hold that prevented him from uttering a sound, and dragged him violently over the rail. The next man, following with his coffee, saw Charlie at the rail, striking madly at the tentacle with his hook-pot, and a startled yell attracted the attention of the others. They spun round and saw old Charlie going over the side in a headlong dive with his waving hook-pot, but were too late to notice the deadly tentacle round his neck. They rushed to the rail and stared down at the dull water, but the man who had seen the tentacle held back. He knew the sort of beast it belonged to.

Men may sail the seas for a lifetime and seldom, if ever, come in contact with the nightmare monsters that inhabit the caves and cliffs of the ocean floor. Gazing down at the slightly muddy water, the men of the *Unicorn* saw a squirming mass of interwoven tentacles resembling enormous snakes, immensely thick and long and tapering at their free ends to the size of a man's thumb. It was a foul sight, an obscene growth from the dark places of the world, where incessant hunger is the driving force. At one place, down near the bulge of the hull, appeared a staring gorgon face with great lidless eyes and a huge parrot beak that moved slightly, opening and shutting as though it had just crunched and swallowed a meal of warm flesh. In its neighborhood the water was stained a reddish hue, possibly with blood from the veins of old Charlie. There were many of those deep-sea devils under the ship, ravenously hungry and now aware that there was food on her decks in the form of puny bodies that could be had for the taking.

Suddenly the men of the watch saw the air above the rail alive with tentacles. They swayed uncertainly for a second or two in order to feel the position of their prey, then lashed out with swift aim at the horrified men. Whipping round them, they tightened their hold to a vise-like grip that no human strength could break, though a sharp knife could slice them in two if properly used. The men were panic-stricken and struck wildly with sheath knives and hook-pots, but failed in their excitement to cut themselves adrift and went over the rail screaming. The boatswain, carpenter, and sailmaker jumped up from the main hatch and

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rushed across the deck to rescue the few survivors of the watch, but half-a-dozen tentacles seized them and jerked them over the side, striking futile blows.

When the first tentacle came over the rail and fastened itself on Charlie, the steward was ambling forward to the galley for the cabin coffee. On seeing the man dragged violently over the rail the steward stopped and stared in amazement, trying to imagine what had happened to the sailor and thinking that perhaps he had become suddenly insane. The reeling gait of old Charlie, however, his struggles and the manner in which he went over the rail, convinced the steward that something had hold of him. His smooth-shaven face, round and placid, became puckered with anxiety and he stared in growing consternation at the struggle that developed between the men of the watch and the tapering tentacles that whipped over the rail in dozens. While he stood watching this primitive contest, a tentacle flung itself round his portly waist and dragged him down before his whimper could rise to a scream of terror.

The cook with the flaming hair came out of the galley with a carving knife and tried to run aft to the poop, but was caught. He slashed off the tentacle but was seized by others and dragged over, the severed tentacle clinging round his body. The men of the starboard watch tumbled out raving with drawn knives in ready hands. They had to divide forces to protect themselves on both sides, as the tentacles were now swaying above each rail from forecastle to poop. Though they fought with fury and some skill they had small chance to win against such desperate odds. Some of them jumped into the rigging to get out of reach by climbing aloft, but the men who tried that exposed themselves to the beasts lurking below and were snatched away immediately. There were too many tentacles to be cut, and even when they were slashed clean through they continued to cling round a man's body. They had suction cups on their under sides and rings of sharp claws within these.

IV

'There's the answer,' said the mate to the skipper when the battle began after the death of old Charlie. 'The things sticking to the bottom are giant octopuses. They're the biggest things in the sea, except for the whales, and only the sperm whale can tackle them. He feeds on them, and sometimes they feed on him, if they can hold him down till he drowns. I'll get a knife and give the men a hand.'

'Better do that than stand here telling me things I already know,' the skipper retorted sharply. 'There's men dying forrid there.'

The mate hurried to the companion on the way to his room for a hunting knife he kept there — a beautiful weapon hitherto useless, with an eight-inch blade as sharp as a razor. The octopus which had folded itself over the stern and jammed the rudder, aware that its companions were obtaining food from the top of this rock-like mass they were clinging to, flung two tentacles over the taffrail and waved one of them in Mister Mergam's direction.

'Look out, sir!' The man at the wheel screamed a warning.

Mister Mergam was just about to descend the companionway when he heard this cry, and he threw a swift glance over his shoulder, saw the thing flicking toward him, and tried to jump down the companionway. He was too late. The tentacle wrapped itself round his chest and tightened. He strained against it, uttering a faint grunt, and braced himself with hands and feet against the hatch.

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'Bring a knife, sir, and cut me loose,' he implored the captain, who stared at him in horror and rushed away for a knife, going down the poop ladder to the door leading to the cabin from the main deck.

The other tentacle found the man at the wheel and caught him round the waist, binding one arm to his side but leaving the other free. It was the rule aboard the *Unicorn* that no seaman should wear a knife while standing his trick at the wheel, therefore Thomson carried none. He knew that human strength could not prevail against the power of these tentacles, though they could be cut, and he waited for the return of the skipper with the knife. Meantime, he made a sudden jerk and dragged the tentacle a couple of feet toward him, wrapped two turns of it round a spoke of the wheel, and held it fast there. It required desperate strength to do that with one hand, and he succeeded only because he was an exceptionally powerful man. Now the octopus could not drag him over the side without breaking the spoke, which was teakwood and very tough.

The mate had nothing but his hands, and these could not serve him. A sharp axe was hung on the bulkhead a few steps below him in the companionway, and he made supreme efforts to go down there against the pull of the beast to secure this weapon. His efforts were unsuccessful, for the octopus refused to slack up and tightened its grip till he groaned with the pain of it.

Though the skipper had not been gone more than a few seconds, Mister Mergam thought he would never come back and cried in a gasping voice for him to hurry. Captain Garton shouted that he could not find the knife in the mate's cabin and was bringing the axe from the bulkhead. He was coming right up.

'For God's sake, hurry!' the mate entreated. 'The brute's crushing me.'

The skipper wrenched the axe out of the slings and staggered up the companion to cut Mister Mergam free, but as he reached him the mate was dragged violently away from the hatch. Captain Garton followed in urgent pursuit. Dashing out on deck, he made a swift step toward the unfortunate mate and swung up the axe for a severing stroke, but before the blade fell Mister Mergam was whipped with a crash against the taffrail and went down over the side.

The man at the wheel found it difficult to hold against the pull of the octopus, even with a double turn of the tentacle round the spoke. He was gasping and purple in the face, and the harder he strove against it the tighter the tentacle was drawn. He was rapidly becoming exhausted. After peering over the side for a few precious moments to see what became of his lost mate, the skipper drew back from the rail horrified and trembling. He was not a strong man. Turning toward the wheel, he noted the perilous plight of the man there, and stumbled across the deck intending to sever the tentacle where it was wrapped round the spoke. In his condition of quaking repulsion he could hardly lift the axe and stood for seconds trying to swing it above his head.

The octopus jamming the rudder eased its pressure down there, and the wheel spun round under the pull of the tentacle, which slipped off the spoke. Thomson was hurtled across the poop and over the side, crashing against the skipper and knocking him down. The axe fell from Captain Garton's hands, and he rose staggering to pick it up. As he seized it he saw another tentacle whipping over the rail toward him, and in a surge of blind fury he swung the axe, which left his hands and went flashing into the sea. He swooned when the tentacle gripped him, and the octopus drew him down.

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Cowering on the forecastle head, the man on lookout saw the last of the crew go down to feed the octopuses, and his mind roved in every direction searching for a means of saving his life. Up to the present no tentacles had come up over the head rail, and he stood absolutely still, hoping that they would not find him.

But in this he was disappointed. One of them came up and waved about, drawing nearer every second. Out of his mind with terror, he sprang to the rail and saw in the water below the appalling face of an octopus. Taking his knife by the blade, he threw it with miraculous aim and saw it sink out of sight in the eye of the beast, which went into a tremendous flurry. Looking aft, the man saw that there were few tentacles now waving over the main deck, and he crept down the ladder to look for a knife. Stealing along the port side, he searched eagerly but could not find one, returned along the starboard side and met the same result. All the men had gone down fighting with the knives in their hands, and the hook-pots. Reaching the fore hatch, he decided to enter the forecastle and shut the door. The ports were already closed. But he was just a moment too late. They got him.

A little while later a pod of sperm whales came up to blow not far from the *Unicorn;* and the octopuses, feeling the near presence of their deadly enemies, went away from there and returned to the deep places.

V

The ship *Merivale,* heading eastward some days out of New York, sighted a ship with all sail set. She was observed to behave in an erratic manner and appeared to be abandoned, since there was nobody at the wheel or about the decks. In the gentle breeze that was blowing shortly after sunrise the strange vessel bore away to the west, came up in the wind with all her canvas flapping, paid off slowly, and bore away again, repeating this endlessly. The skipper and the second mate of the *Merivale* watched her queer behavior from the poop, and, as no answer was made to their signals, a boat was sent off to the stranger to investigate.

The boat pulled alongside the *Unicorn,* and the second mate was boosted to the rail. They hove up the boat's painter, which he made fast, and scrambled up beside him. Except for some stains of coffee on the fore deck, which had not completely dried, the decks were clear and shipshape. In the cabin the second mate noted that the table was set for coffee, but the dishes had not been used. He scratched his head in complete bewilderment. All the boats were in the chocks, their covers untouched, and there was no sign of disease or mutiny. As he stood pondering the mysterious situation, one of his men came aft and halted in front of him.

'They ain't been gone very long, sir,' he reported. 'The fire's still fresh in the galley stove.'

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SONNET

BY ELIZABETH MORROW

Like treasure lost at sea, her loveliness
Lies buried now: unchanged, inviolate,
Beyond all sounding, glassy depths possess
That beauty; naught has perished small or great.
Far from this surface world of weeks and days,
The coming summer or the winter's cold,
Ineffably her own, a thousand ways
Rest in the dark of understanding, hold
Color and light against that other death
Oblivion. Sunk in silence they await
The moving tide of memory at whose breath
Waters divide above our doomed estate;
Her look, her laugh, her step upon the stair,
Leaping to life, incomparably fair.

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THE BRIGHT ISLE

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

To Munson Havens

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI
25 *January*, 1937

MY DEAR FRIEND: —

I am now in Haiti, ready to bet with anyone that it is the most charming and interesting spot on this hemisphere. It has something for pretty nearly everybody. Its marvelous beauty goes to the tourist's heart and stays there; the student of civilization delights himself in hobnobbing with the people; and the island appears to be a virgin field for research-workers in almost every branch of science I can think of, from agronomy up and down.

Even an archæologist might find something to do here, for people occasionally turn up artifacts of the earliest known inhabitants, the tribe which Columbus found, and which his noble countrymen killed off so promptly that there has not been an authentic trace of their blood in the Haitian population for a couple of centuries. No one seems to know just what those folks were; some sort of Indians, probably, for they were copper-colored. They were often raided by Caribs, however, so probably there was some admixture of blood resulting, since that is the usual thing. Their numbers are estimated at 200,000, though I do not know on what evidence. In his official report Columbus gives these poor souls a great character for gentleness, kindness and hospitality. It would have been money in their pocket, as Artemus Ward said, 'if they had given Chris a warm meal and sent him home again ore the ragin Billers.' In fact, I think you and I might agree that it would have been a good thing all round if the whole Western Hemisphere had been let lie fallow for fifty or a hundred thousand years, or until such time as people came along with sense and decency enough to do the right thing by it; assuming, of course, that such people ever would come along, which I should say is open to great doubt.

I have seen a small fragment of an artifact in clay, showing the head and face of some animal, very well moulded. I am so ignorant of such matters that I have no idea whether the thing was originally part of a jug-handle or part of an idol; it could do for either, as far as I know to the contrary. Over on the south side of the island there are certain mounds which appear to be artificial, like those in the Ohio Valley. It might be worth while to cut a cross-section of one of them to find out what is inside, if anything; it would not cost much. Perhaps the whole region is worth a look-see by some competent archæologist, for I cannot get any testimony to its ever having had one.

Biologists and anthropologists could certainly do some business here. As reckoned by political geography, the blood-strains uniting in the present population are Spanish, African and French; Spanish and African since 1500, French since 1600. The Africans

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were slaves imported by the Spanish and French, and many French also had a slave-status, having been brought over under indenture, like our own original settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth. It is not generally understood, I believe, that slavery in America was originally an *institution;* there was no color or nationality peculiar to it; it knew no such thing as a color-line. So here in Haiti a man might be white, black, brown, French, Indian, African, anything, but if he bore the slave-status, that was that, and he was simply out of luck.

But blood-strains do not follow political geography; and here is another thing not generally known: Whereas the original importations of low-grade labor into our own country, for example, were mostly 'clean-strain' (our miscellaneous importations were relatively late, following the development of heavy industry), Haiti's were anything but that. The French slaves were of every strain from the Channel to the Mediterranean; Bretons, Basques, Normans, Poitevins, Picards, Angevins, everything, bearing with them their peculiar provincial dialects, customs, habits of mind and temperament. Likewise the Africans were not all raked out of one tribe, district or coast; they came out of pretty nearly every tribe in Africa, differing in language, social customs and religious practices, and often hostile one to another. The result is a mixture such as I doubt exists anywhere else in the world, and I would suppose its biology might have some points of special interest.

Nor is this all. Haiti was cut off from the rest of the world after it emerged from under the French domination and set up for itself in 1804. It closed its ports for twenty years, building a sort of Chinese wall around itself, during which time nobody came here; and for various good reasons very few came afterwards. Practically none of those who did come got any further than the port towns or had any contact, even indirectly, with more than eight or ten per cent of the people. Thus as far as the great general mass of the population is concerned, the country remained in virtual isolation until the American invasion of 1915, and even now there is an accidental combination of factors tending powerfully to maintain that isolation; indeed, which make it almost impossible of breaking down. Hence the specific cultural peculiarities of a civilization bred out of a most unusual mixture of blood-strains and traditions have been developed in more than a century of isolation, unmodified by social contacts or biological adulterations. One may put it that they have been developed under laboratory conditions, and therefore they might be well worth investigation by some pundit who is in that line of trade.

But the man who really gets his money's worth out of Haiti is the student of civilized society, such as you are, and such as I too pretend to be, in a small way. You would be here but a short time before you would be asking yourself, if what you see is the upshot of a century of isolation, precisely what could a larger intercourse with other nations do to improve it. You know the conventional answer to that question, and so do I, but if you could make it stick in this instance, you are just the man I want to see. Isolation is supposed to be a bad thing for a country, and perhaps it may be, speaking generally, though I must say most of the arguments I have heard on that point seemed to be specious. But has it been bad for Haiti, and is it bad now? The longer you stay here and the closer you reckon the fat with the lean, the tougher that query becomes; at least, that is my experience. I confess that when I tot up the balance of advantage and disadvantage, I am not

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at all sure that Haiti would get a net profit — mind you, I say a *net* profit — out of any freer intercourse with the outside world than it now has.

I am speaking, of course, from the point of view of civilization; and if one takes the apparatus of civilization as the index of civilization, as all good Americans do, the answer is simple enough. For you and me, civilization does not mean the mere possession and operation of machinery. It means the humanization of man in society, which the possession of machinery may or may not tend to promote, and may indeed actively discourage. Our countrymen, on the contrary, can never get it through their heads that a society which sports a great array of schools, banks, industries, railways, finance-companies, newspapers, plumbing, household appliances and so on, may yet be thoroughly uncivilized. Naturally they cannot, for if they could it would set them to examining their own society, which in turn would set them to examining themselves, which in turn, as Dickens's old lady said, 'is one of those things that simply will not bear thinking about.' Nevertheless the fact stands; a society may have all the apparatus of civilization there is, and remain quite uncivilized; and on the other hand, a society may reach an enviably high degree of civilization with but a small amount of apparatus, and that too, perhaps, of hardly more than a primitive order.

So when you look at our immense and complicated array of apparatus and see what we have done with it in the way of actual civilization, and then look at Haiti's and see what has been done with that, you are bound to suspect that there may be too much of a good thing. A society may become so absorbed in running the machinery of civilization as to forget what it is that the machinery is supposed to do, or indeed to forget that it is supposed to do anything. In such a case, obviously, as in the United States, the people have more machinery of civilization than their natural capacity for civilization enables them to use profitably; and the result of their mismanagement of it is so bad as to work against, and ultimately to defeat, the very purpose which the machinery is meant to promote. Dissolving Haiti's isolation would merely mean increasing indefinitely the amount of its available machinery; and the question is whether the example of other countries, notably our own, does not strongly suggest that this is something which can all too easily be overdone.

I am not going to write you a general dissertation on the subject in this boiling hot weather, so by way of illustration I shall take only one conspicuous piece of social machinery — schools. Ours, which are many, do so little to civilize our society (indeed they work mightily against the spread of civilization, rather than for it) mainly because they are set to the Sisyphean task of educating people far in excess of their abilities. Haiti has few schools; I am told that only about one per cent of the population can read. Perhaps a few more than that know the alphabet, but for actual reading it comes down to something like one per cent. Very well; now, my dear friend, candidly considering the natural capacities of our own people, considering the kind of thing they read, the purposes that guide their reading and the uses they make of what they read, would n't you say that one per cent would be about right? I think so. Regarding literacy as strictly a device for helping to civilize a society, does it not seem to you that our society would to-day be much further on the way to civilization if that device had been left in the hands of those only who have a sufficient natural ability to make an appropriate use of it — say,

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at the outside, about one per cent? I think so.

It comes down to this: Is it the object of education to produce and foster an élite, or to groom the mediocrity of the masses? We in America think the latter; we call it by the absurd name of 'democratizing education.' The judicious have always known better; they have known that the dissemination of culture is and must be an effect of the high culture of such as are capable of culture; in other words, of an élite. Trying to get at it the other way around, as we do, results only in what Mr. Michael Sadleir calls 'the decapitation of the eminent in the interests of the average,' and in the consequent ostracizing of culture; which is precisely what the addiction to our theory has brought about, just as Ernest Renan long ago foresaw it would. As far back as before you and I were born, he said that a people committed to our theory 'would long expiate their mistake by their intellectual mediocrity, the vulgarity of their manners, their superficial spirit, their failure in general intelligence'; and it does not take much of an eye to see that this expiation is now going on at full speed and with no sign of respite.

In its virtual isolation, Haiti has bred an élite which I must say is the wonder and admiration of a visitor. It is very small — probably in about the right proportion to the population — but of a remarkably high and fine order. I have conversed with several specimens of it, and have read their books. True, some have gone abroad to put a mansard roof on their training for some specialty, usually scientific, but many have got on with what their native schools were able to give them. One of these latter told me he had got all his education in the free schools of Haiti, and had never gone outside the island until he was forty-four; and he is one of the most accomplished and highly cultivated men in my acquaintance anywhere. You see, I think, what I am driving at. If Haiti's isolation were dissolved, every foreign influence would bring pressure, direct or indirect, to 'democratize education'; yet if Haiti's schools can produce even one specimen as creditable as this man, it strikes me that the Haitians may well go very gingerly about a flirtation with that theory, especially when they observe its effect on the civilization of the countries which have adopted it. A hundred years ago, New England's schools were probably but little, if any, better than Haiti's, yet they somehow contrived to produce a very respectable élite; and if the 'democratized' schools of New England are now producing any Channings, Holmeses, Lowells, Everetts, Emersons and Danas, I have so far somehow not heard of it.

As with education, so with the other avenues of intercourse with other nations; commerce, finance, news-service, transportation, tourist-traffic and so on. I get the impression, whatever it amounts to, that perhaps the Haitians are doing pretty well as they are, and that they have about all the machinery of civilization that they can carry comfortably. The other day an American who has been here a dozen years told me that when he came an officer of our invading forces said to him, 'I think possibly your experience here may be something like mine. In my first year, when I saw what needed to be done and how easy it was to do it, I felt I had to pitch right in and get it done. In my second year I was n't in such a hurry; I was willing to wait a little and let things have a chance to happen; and now in my third year I catch myself thinking, Well, it's their country, and if they want it this way, why not let them have it?'

Why not, indeed? The Haitian looks happy, acts happy, and there is unanimous testimony that he is happy. How

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many people do you know in your town who fill that bill? I have not once seen the hard, weary, vacuous face that you and I see everywhere in our respective bailiwicks. Does not a diffused general happiness and contentment say something for the quality of the civilization in which it prevails, even if the people have no railways and can't read newspapers? The Haitian can't freeze; the climate won't let him. He can't starve unless he wants to; the earth and its waters are too prolific. Any sort of shelter that will shed rain is enough, and as for clothes, I'll take oath that one garment is one too many, unless you get up pretty high in the mountains. 'Social security' is something the Haitian does not understand at all. He does not like hard work any more than you or I do, and the average of his natural intelligence and capacities runs on about the same level as elsewhere. He has exquisite good manners and is amiable, kind, and especially obliging to strangers. Foreigners who have lived here for years tell me that you may go where you will in the forests and fastnesses of Haiti, and the two things you will never meet are a deadly varmint and an ill-disposed Haitian. Defining civilization as the humanization of man in society, as you and I do, all this seems to sum up to a degree of civilization respectable enough, to say the least, to breed doubt whether an indiscriminate inflow of foreign influence might not cost more, in terms of actual civilization, than it came to.

What most interests me here, however, are the factors which I spoke of a moment ago as tending to keep up Haiti's isolation. The most important one is the constitutional provision that no foreigner can own land in Haiti. When Toussaint, Dessalines and Henri Christophe — who notwithstanding all the rainbows squirted at them by Wordsworth, Wendell Phillips and Co., must have been fearful fellows — when they threw off the French yoke in 1804, they had seen enough of large foreign-owned landed estates, very correctly associating them with slavery. They seem to have got a glimpse of the great basic truth that it is impossible to exploit a people unless you first expropriate them from the land. In this they showed more sound economic wisdom than has been shown by all our progressives, laborites, square-dealers and new-dealers. Dessalines cut up the land into small-holding peasant proprietorships, and put a provision against foreign ownership into the constitution, where it remained until the American invasion of 1915.

Thereby hangs a nice story. As you know, capital gravitates straight to any field which offers two inducements: abundant natural resources and an abundant potential supply of cheap low-grade labor. Haiti has no end of both. Hence whole generations of scoundrelly American imperialist enterprisers have licked their lips at the thought of making it another Porto Rico by expropriating the natives and thus enabling themselves to exploit them as thoroughly as the French did years ago by the same method. But that clause in the constitution has always been a killer; there was no way to exploit the natives until it was got rid of, and apparently the only way to get rid of it was by force. You no doubt recall how in the 'seventies a group of would-be exploiters wheedled Grant into a scheme for forcibly annexing the eastern half of the island, and how near they came to succeeding.

The great chance came in 1915, when all America's attention was focused on the European war. A Heaven-sent rumpus broke out in Port-au-Prince, in the course of which a number of political partisans, including the president, were most laudably killed off; I say laudably, for Haitian politics, what

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there is of them, are as noisome, and their politicians as verminous, as ours are or as such are everywhere. Our marines went in and took possession; and in 1918 a new constitution, with this cardinal provision left out, was written by a pliant politician in our Navy Department, and forced on the Haitians at the point of the bayonet.

Like Poincaré's silly invasion of the Ruhr, however, the thing did not pan out; the Haitians would not stand for it. We occupied Haiti for years, hanging on hopefully, and getting out as late as 1932, I think it was, only because the scheme was not practicable. Its abettors finally saw that it would have to be garrisoned in perpetuity by about six marines per native, and would cost more than could be got out of it. The Haitians did not wait for our backs to be turned before pitching out the constitution of 1918, and adopting a new one which restored the old provision.

People will tell you that we had to invade Haiti in support of the Monroe Doctrine: i.e., if we had not gone in, other creditor nations would. Yet I can very easily imagine some Grover Cleveland serving notice that our State Department was no collection-agency, and that we would neither go in ourselves nor let anyone else go in; Haiti might murder all the politicians it liked — not half enough of them being murdered as it was. Others will tell you that we went in because the Germans were about to establish a base on the Mole-St.-Nicolas, commanding the Windward Passage. Pretty thin, my friend — pretty thin. Not that I would put any conceivable idiocy past the Wilson Administration in the face of its superb record, but if that were the case, why should we have gone on occupying Haiti for a dozen years after all supposititious peril from the Germans had blown by? Can you believe we would ever have got out if there had been any prospect of making the enterprise pay? Hardly. The whole episode is simply a first-class exhibit of economic imperialism backed up by force of arms; in other words, an exhibit of American politicians in cahoots with American enterprisers — all in all, as our old friend Artemus said, 'a sweet and luvly set of men. I'd like to own as good a house as some of 'em would break into.'

So much for that. The second factor tending to maintain Haiti's isolation is the absence of a middle class. Industrialists and merchants are the sappers and miners of a country's isolation; indeed, as Mr. Jefferson said, rather contemptuously, 'Merchants have no country. The spot where they stand is not as dear to them as that from which they draw their gains.' Haiti has no industries of any consequence, and few merchants. Eighty-three per cent of the people are in agriculture, which they carry on in small independent holdings, usually detached; the inland settlements are mere hamlets, pretty widely separated, and most of them are unearthly hard to get at. Thus there is no general contact of the people with an organized merchant class, except in the port towns; which from the point of view of civilization is all to the good. You remember Julius Cæsar's grim observation that one reason why the Belgians had managed to preserve so fine a character was that 'drummers almost never get through to them with a line of goods which tend to effeminate the spirit.' That holds for at least eighty per cent of Haiti's population, and it is one strong root of their persistence of type.

Again, Haiti is very short on bridges and roads; that is, what we would call roads. What few it has are poor. Yet while this is highly discouraging to foreigners, the natives seem to have all the transportation they need, for they get about on mules, and mules care nothing whatever about roads; any sort of

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footing suits them perfectly. One day, wishing to reach a little settlement near Grand-Goave, I had to shin up about two hundred feet on a pebbly crumbling pathway that was almost perpendicular. It was a tidy climb; I was well out of wind when I reached the top; and going down again was even harder than going up. Yet when I got down I saw coming after me a cavalcade of a dozen men and women mounted on mules which walked down that precipice as easily and surely as you would walk down a flight of steps. Neither the people nor the mules seemed to think they were doing anything spectacular, but I found it a most remarkable and reassuring sight. For all I can see, the island is about as penetrable as it need be and ought to be, consistently with keeping the enviable quality of its civilization unimpaired. Aviation has come in; there is a landing-field at Port-au-Prince; and tourist-cruises have lately taken to stopping ships there for a few hours; but as long as the bulk of the population remains as nearly inaccessible as it is, the effect of these misfortunes will doubtless be pretty well localized.

Lastly, and perhaps least important, though well worth mentioning, the discouragement of foreign capitalist enterprise has done a great deal to keep the development of Haiti's natural resources from touching off the get-rich-quick spirit. If you could corner the banana business, or sugar, or coffee, I suppose it might run to some real money, but the mischief of it is that you can't get your hands on the land. The best you can do is a middleman's export business, buying by handfuls from small producers, sorting the product, and shipping it out; and while this is a good business and very useful, one does not get purse-proud on it overnight. Easy money means exploitation; and in so admirably safeguarding themselves against exploitation the Haitians have pretty well blocked up the approaches to easy money, and thereby have kept the rage for easy money from running wild.

So there you have what seems to me a most interesting combination of four factors which must largely determine the character of any society. Do you know of just that combination existing anywhere else? I do not, and I think a journey here to observe it is well worth while. I have the idea that it may prove to be Haiti's surest guarantee of sound and rational progress, absurd as that idea undoubtedly would seem to our countrymen, and perhaps even to you. You know, we Americans have no notion whatever of any progress which does not go very fast; but the obstinate fact is, as Sir James Jeans says, that the only kind of progress which can go very fast is progress downhill.

Haiti's lurid past, its long isolation, and the grotesque features of its history, have stimulated sensational writers to produce outrageous libels on its people and their civilization. I have lately been reading some of them with infinite disgust. It seems such an unsportsmanlike, unmanly thing to traduce a people who have made so much of themselves in the face of most undeserved misfortune; a people who in 1804 were a mere amorphous mob suddenly emancipated from atrocious conditions of servitude, and who since then have organized themselves into a peculiarly interesting and attractive society — and I believe a sound one — quite on their own, with no help or encouragement worth speaking of. It is fair enough, for instance, to be amused at the splendiferous court of Haiti's remarkable emperor, Faustin I, just as it is fair to be amused at the extravagances of the Court of St. James. Faustin and his homemade dukes, counts and princesses certainly must

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have put on a gaudy show; 'Rastus was on parade' in those days, no doubt about it. But all that sort of thing is another matter, and quite foreign to the wretched stuff that I am deprecating.

Suppose the Haitians do keep up an exotic religious cult and an exotic ritual — I do not know that they do, but it is what they would naturally do and have every right to do. Suppose they are superstitious and have faith in *Hexerei* — well, how about the witchcraft-sodden regions of Eastern Pennsylvania? Suppose their dances carry a strong sexual implication and lead to sexual excesses — well, surely a person who came down here from the United States to look at anything like that would be taking a busman's holiday. My point is that in any serious view of a people such matters are quite trivial, and an exaggerated or exclusive concern with them is unfriendly and indecent; yet it is with these above all else that our popular literature about Haiti concerns itself.

The consequence is that visitors come here with their minds stuffed full of absurdities and their imaginations cocked and primed for any untoward adventure. Last Shrovetide, a year ago, a woman who had just been disgorged from a tourist-ship saw the usual fancy-dress parade moving through the streets of Port-au-Prince, and asked a native what it was. The native, who spoke no English, finally got the gist of what she wanted through his head, and said, *carnivals*. The woman legged it back to the ship in full cry, and reported that she had seen a huge procession of cannibals. Only last week another woman, who was told she could find some article she wanted in a certain small native shop, refused to go there for fear she would be smitten with leprosy; she had read somewhere that native shops and native goods were full of it, and catching it was practically a sure-fire chance.

I am told that one who stays here a fortnight never quite rids himself of the fascinations which the island and its society exercise, and is always hoping to come back. I can easily believe that. I met a man on shipboard who had been here four years as an officer in the invasion, and he said he had never seen either place or people that he loved as much.

He was another of the fine type I mentioned in my last letter, the kind that gives one a just pride in one's nationality. When I asked him what the new president of Haiti was like, he said he seemed to be a pretty good sort. 'The one before him lay down and let us do anything we liked,' he said, 'but this fellow made a lot of trouble for us. We respected him for it, though, for of course we had no business there, and we all knew it.'

What a queer country ours is! One runs into so many people like this man, people who are everything a human being should be, in integrity, intelligence, sensitiveness, instinct for the right thing, sometimes everything even in culture, and yet who are socially ineffectual; they have no more influence in determining the course of our collective public life than gnats on a locomotive. Probably, though, we are not exceptional; probably in other countries as well, in Italy, Germany, France, England, 'the revolt of the masses' is as effectively suffocating such people in the same quicksand of ignorance, vulgarity and brutality. If so — and I believe really it is so — it makes an extremely blue outlook for civilization at large.

This is a dismal tone on which to end a friendly letter. Yet it is the best I can do by way of a happy ending, for as things stand at the moment, I swear by the dog of Egypt — *νὴ τὸν κύνα*, the Socratic oath — I can see no happy ending possible for anything, even a letter.

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THE SOUNDLESS TRUMPET

BY MARY ANTIN

I

It will happen suddenly, under almost any combination of circumstances that may enter my life, that I become aware of a soundless warning to stand still, cease from the activity of the moment, take note — take note. A constraining call to *attention* that I ignore, if I must, at the cost of a peculiar sense of frustration and loss. If I respond to the mysterious summons, as usually I do, what results is so elusive, so inconsequential from the point of view of the immediately practical, that I have nothing to show as justification for interrupting my day's work to give myself up to these moments. I am called to make a journey from which I shall bring back no popular souvenirs, hardly an intelligible report. Yet I go, again and again, gladly, with a tension of expectancy unlike any other experience of waiting and wanting.

As nearly as possible I must remain in the position in which the warning overtook me. In bodily movement, in delay, there is danger of breaking the magic contact. The order is, *Attend — now!* But sometimes a minimum of delay is unavoidable. Perhaps I was cooking; I must at least turn off the gas. Or the room is cold; I'm likely to get chilled, and thereby hindered in concentration, unless I wrap up or put a log on the fire. Whatever preparations I am obliged to make, it must be with the fewest possible motions, automatically performed, while I hold in check all thought and emotion; a state of inner suspension to float me safe over the snags of distraction to the quiet pool of receptive concentration.

Surrender is the essence of the state of receptivity within which, as within a sealed crystal, the ineffable transaction takes place. I surrender my concerns of the moment, my habitual code of duty, my responsibility for the use of time. I *let go* without and within. One single activity occupies me at last: an intense *assent*, as if every cell of my being were chiming *yes, yes, yes, Amen* — so be it. I wait. I am still. I am open. The moment, at first, has nothing to *do* with anything; it *is*, and of me there is nothing left but the desire to explore that moment.

How to hold it, how to press it closer, how to stay with it long enough to pierce the last film of obtuseness, to complete the mystical osmosis by which I feel myself being absorbed, particle by willing particle, into *that which is!* It is here, where I can least afford distraction, that distraction sets in in a most unmanageable form: an unruly surging of words, words, words that want to tell me what is happening, thus chaining me to a spectator's post when I am ready to slip over the last threshold of mere apprehending.

I know the danger of breaking my immobility to spear the foolish words that come boiling into the net of surface consciousness. I have gone far

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enough with the mystery on occasion to know that *words of which I am aware* are my great peril at these times; yet the meddlesome pen thrusts itself in again and again, till it seems essential to the completed state of nonresisting by which, as by a Jacob's ladder, I seek to climb out of the pit of mere cognition, to turn it also loose, this absurd irrelevant splinter of metal and hard rubber. Go, then, go, go, you shallow words, go all of you there are, till I am altogether cleansed of wording, till I rest from thoughts and slip through the *I*-barrier.

I will accept it as a penance, this trampling of hollow words through my holy moment. Words are tools, and I have put by all tools for the time being. I will let them pass, the tyrannical bodiless creatures, uncensored symbols of my poor storehouse of personal experience. I will even bless them, so as to hasten their departure. In the world there is a place for words. My place is in the secret silken seed pod of perfected stillness. My business is to hear the soundless trumpet of unrevealable gospels.

II

When the warning has sounded, — that unmistakable web of inner tension that stops me in my tracks, — nothing remains unchanged. Objects retain their relative bulk, color, and position, but all things together are suspended in a matrix of enhanced significance. Every shape and sound presses on me with some urgency of meaning, and I reach out, out, in a corresponding urgency of desire to touch and know. Between the two waves of tension, the incoming and the outgoing, I have a curiously compact sense of myself, as if I were the living core of the moment of time concerned. I feel myself gathered into a hollow cocoon woven of layers and layers of spun light. My cocoon seems to be anchored in the centre of a great velvet stillness. An ancient stillness: it was always there; I have only just penetrated to it. Sounds that reach me, strained through that stillness, are at once muted and intensified; lowered in pitch but amplified in volume. And every sound an accent of importunity.

Everything warns me of a consummation pending: some special coöperation seems to be required of me. I respond with that reiterated *yes* — *yes*, struck out deep down within; *yes*, I am present, I listen, I wait. But I never quite touch it, the thing that seems to be straining toward me as I toward it. The tight kernel of concentration begins to diffuse; I find myself centring my attention on separated objects. Every object within its own sheath of clarity. That huddle of housetops outside my high window, the lichened flowerpots on my window sill, the brass paper knife lying across an open book on my writing table — familiar in shape, color, position, but steeped in that transforming clarity, pressing on me with a pressure not of inanimate things.

This narrow view of housetops across the narrow street, as I stay with it, begins to contemplate me in turn. It is a response comparable only to the response of a living being. And this statement cannot be thrown out, except as the whole report is thrown out. For there are no inanimate things now: everything lives. The intricate sky line besieges me with a clear admonition: *Receive me*, and *know*. The same invitation, with the same inherent guarantee of its supreme importance, holds me on the stretch whether I grapple the flowerpot or the paper cutter or my own faint shadow on the floor: *Receive me* into yourself, and *know*.

My vigil at the high window is a voiceless river carrying me from pool to pool of contemplation. From time to time, like a sea gull rising from a quiet

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inlet, some external object detaches itself from the serene totality and faces me steadfastly across the living stillness; and here, where no speech or language is, it beats out syllables of uncorrupted significance. Afterward I put a name to it, the least mystifying I can find: *Arise! Behold! Attend!* WHAT IS *is here!* And having written it, I suddenly remember Moses at the moment when he had to translate the Voice of Sinai into the tables of the law.

Two men take shape on a roof in the foreground of my entranced view. They move back and forth, they stoop and rise, they do something or other with a stretched cord or tape, they manipulate a skylight. Two drab puppets going through trivial motions against the drab November sky. Then, suddenly, with lances of insight weaving through and through me, I *see* them, I see what they are: they are the one who sits at the window watching! I have been looking at myself, as I might absently look in a mirror and fail to recognize the reflection. The two men on the roof are distinct from me as the fingers of my hand that I spread in front of my face; they are united with me as the several corpuscles in a drop of blood. *One* — we are one, indissolubly one. This knowledge is rest.

III

Is revelation the primary function of all created things, and we only perceive the fact in moments of spiritual quickening? Every single thing as it stands, even such commonplace and sometimes sordid objects as my attic window frames in, is capable of blossoming out, under the right conditions, — say when the dew of higher Heaven falls! — in the unmistakable calligraphy of ultimate truth, like a message in invisible ink that only needs a few drops of the proper fluid to bring it out. Usually some degree of blissful shock accompanies the revelation — a clean stab of poignancy, of wonder instantly passing into glad recognition: the summons and response, *Lo* and *Amen*, in one single sudden stroke of a gong resolved into a golden humming. On the widening ripples of that vibration I ride, I ride to the rim of infinity. If I had to choose a state for the indefinite suspension of my mortal existence, I should choose one of these timeless moments of the troubling of consciousness by a prick of clarity.

The mystic lances rain on me to-day. Behold my neighbor the seamstress, in the street-floor apartment directly across the way, who has been sitting in her window all the while I am sitting in mine. This woman has been a shadow on my life these three months past, ever since I came to the neighborhood. All day long and every day, from early morning till after lights begin to show in the windows of less economical tenants in the block, she sits close to the window, bent over her sewing, with one panel of the cheap cretonne curtains savingly folded back, for a better light. Her apartment is dark and dingy; I have been there, with small jobs of sewing that I was ashamed to let her do when I saw how sick the woman was, how strained her poor eyes, how harried her existence with mean cares. Her desperate respectability shamed me most of all. Here was as good a woman as I, and I went my ways, in a comparative splendor of personal freedom and cultural opulence, — yes, in my shabby attic, — doing nothing to ward off the daily injuries to her human dignity. My own intimate sorrows aside, — for who lives to be over fifty and does not carry a sword in the heart? — my lot compared to hers was as a brook through a sunny meadow compared to a choked miasmic pool. I never went up or down the block without greeting her; she would raise her

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eyes from her work long enough to recognize me, with her slow, melancholy smile. Did she ever read the apology in my salutation? When I ventured to bring her a trifling gift, — an aristocratic grapefruit wrapped in its coat of arms of printed tissue paper, or a handful of calendulas from a street vendor's basket, — did she guess that it was a propitiatory offering to my own conscience? Her station at the window, facing mine, kept me from forgetting my unliquidated responsibility. Of all that the situation demanded of me, I gave nothing but compassion.

So for three uneasy months, till my memorable hour of revelations. I did not mark the point when the familiar silhouette of the seamstress entered my abstracted consciousness; I do not recall any moment of the discharge of tensions, in this case, any transitional shock or strain. In all quietness, in the space of a serene inhalation, the tableau at the opposite window faded as under a purging light, and in its place I saw — as naturally, as inevitably as if I had turned a page in a simple text I was reading — a prismatic marginal note on the flame-white scroll of human destiny. Again, as in the case of the sky line, an external phenomenon — in this case loaded with moral discomfiture — resolved itself into pure reconciling significance.

This is how I now translate the identifying phrases on my scribbling pad intended to pin down this particular fragment of that morning's experience; for of course only the briefest tags were set down at the time; what I am writing to-day is an expansion, in terms as close to the core of the original experience as I can find, of the unsought words and broken phrases that whirled in my head in clouds, in the wake of each successive moment of illumination. The note reads: *Seamstress at her window — stitching humanity's robe of immortality.* And an additional note in pencil, to indicate that it was put down after reflection had played on the original memorandum: *Awake! Awake! Awake, my sister!* In my private vocabulary, these phrases have elaborate and explicit connotations, like a page in an artist's sketchbook. Translating, I find that on that day of flickering clairvoyance the seamstress in her servitude and I in my comparative mastery appeared as interchangeable members of an algebraic equation where X equals the Oneness of life. To catch an intimation of the Oneness of life through eternity is to see the obvious degradation of the seamstress and the hidden trouble in my own life canceled out, as all partial things cancel in the infinite curve of cosmic evolution. And something of that moment's transfiguration has remained as a permanent film of tenderness across the cold façade of the sewing woman's dwelling; her bent figure, in the unrelaxed economy of black wear, remains to underline all that I have found in high esoteric teachings of the nullity of our human categories of good and evil. I greet my neighbor now with a more spontaneous recognition of our sisterhood; my compassion, purified at last by cosmic humor, now includes us both, seeing how we are equally babes crying in the dark, when to see the unquenchable Light we only need to pray to have the scales taken from our eyes!

IV

With a violence as of water bursting a dam, the school down the street breaks out for recess. The air is beaten into a froth of shrillness. Jets of little girls' laughter break over my head; individual cries, like unruly drops of quicksilver, flash out and scatter; a shrill yelping, it might be of a pack of frolicsome puppies, spatters my immobility. The web of concentration trembles under the impact, but does not break.

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I dive into the vocal vortex, full-conscious, and am made acquainted with the beat of the cosmic pulse. Rising slowly to the surface again, I wonder that I never before recognized the patterned rhythms of a school of children shouting at their play. Bright, brittle, intricate, like the tracings on a thickly frosted windowpane; a pattern, not a confusion.

The thin tinkle of a hand bell snips all the threads of the pattern at once. A hundred children are choked off as abruptly as they were released. Silence like a velvet curtain. I sit very, very still while the inundating insight of this moment condenses into a word: If the universe could be wiped out this instant, leaving only the auditory vibrations of the school recess just ended, it could be reconstructed, complete in all its myriad aspects, from this one etheric record of an infinitesimal moment of earth history!

All of the universe in everything. Voices of a thousand enlightened ones, speaking in every tongue, in every possible dialect of accommodation to my ignorance, have tried to tell me this thing before; but the hearing of the inner ear comes slowly, with longing and waiting and devotion.

V

Consider how surprised and confused you would be if a stranger whose advances you repulsed on various occasions returned one day with credentials identifying him as an old friend whom you had forgotten, and a dignitary in the places of his sojourn since you last knew him. This is exactly what I suffered, except that I was spared the embarrassment of trying to explain my ungracious behavior, when the piebald alley cat that I was always chasing off the fire escape came into view on this day of days. Grimy, haggard, with caved-in flanks and the tentative movements of a creature never sure of its welcome, the miserable tramp, who had been crouching on my rear window ledge, hunched herself for flight, startled eyes focused to catch my least movement, the moment she saw me looking her way from my post the length of the room away. This creature had been the object of my indignant midnight apostrophes, and the subject of my morning complaints to the house agent, for all the weeks of my residence in this house; for it was she who, by habitually making her last stand at the top of the fire escape at my back window, drew all the tomcats in loud amorous pursuit to within a few feet of my pillow. When I first moved in, before she had discovered my inhospitable temper, she regularly entered my attic apartment at night, with a flying leap over the radiator under the open window that startled me awake. Once she actually curled up on my bed, which was that night occupied by a guest. My unsuccessful efforts to obtain relief had reduced me to a state of belligerence unrelieved by a spark of compassion for the wretched homeless creature. Her occasional daytime appearances, in bad weather, when she was looking for cover, affected me as the insult added to injury; we would glare at each other through the window glass, in mutual hostility, till I made some threatening gesture and she doubled herself and streaked down the fire escape.

On the historical November morning when I discovered her humped on the window sill, I was worse startled than the cat. If I had voiced my quick surprise, I should have exclaimed, 'Why, it's *you!*' I was looking into the eyes of a comely being I had known from before I knew anything; a wise impersonal being whose presence somehow linked me with large benevolent mysteries. I do not wish to suggest anything esoteric; the experience was

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too native to this earth, too uncomplicated for that. As if you had been absorbed in a trifling book and were annoyed by someone turning on the radio, till the music finally caught your attention and you picked up the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in a familiar passage of a Beethoven symphony, and gladly gave yourself to it. Mystery there is in the metamorphosis of my alley cat under a flicker of spiritual illumination, but need it be a more esoteric mystery than the simultaneous presence of an orchestra playing in New York in every corner of the globe where someone chooses to manipulate a tiny disk? We are told that 'only one octave, out of the sixty-two octaves of wave lengths that are known to exist, is now perceptible to human consciousness.' Perhaps the mechanism of such seeming recoveries of deeper relationships as are implied in my changed view of the alley cat — in all of the fleeting illuminations here recorded, in fact — will be found, eventually, in some one of those sixty-one dead octaves. The whole story of science is only that: the recovery of hidden knowledges and latent values through amplified faculties.

VI

When I look at my untidy notes, pages of coarse scribbling, such as I sometimes produce when making notes in the dark, I wonder that I caught so many veridical symbols out of the swarming hour, seeing that my attention was on the inner event, not on the transcription. It is really as if my pen found its own words: but they are strictly words in my personal idiom, symbolic precipitates of intimate experience, so that from a word, a broken phrase, an ejaculation, I can refashion the distinctive incidents of that entire morning; as a woman sorting a drawerful of calico scraps can describe the gown that was made of that stuff, in each instance, and how she came by her samples. But this is as far as the analogy carries: for while any needleworker could piece together a patchwork quilt from any collection of pieces, my pieces — my raw notes — would suggest a design only to someone who has had similar experiences of modifications of consciousness. The average thoughtful reader, for whom this record is intended, could make very little of my original notes. He might feel through them a pulse of life, but whether of bird, beast, or archangel, he would be at a loss to tell. And the unfolding of these compressed symbols is a dangerous exercise. Dealing with matters not reducible to strict definition, all I can do is pile simile on simile, parable on parable.

> It cannot be told by the words of the mouth,
> it cannot be written on paper:
> It is like a dumb person who tastes a sweet
> thing — how shall it be explained?

It is a pantomime I am writing, a shadow play, requiring an informed interpreter; a smoke signal sent up from a desert height, in the hope that some fellow explorer somewhere may catch the message and reply, or at least be heartened to continue his own quest.

Nothing is more characteristic of the state of subtler perception, no matter how brief its duration in any given case, than the feeling, already alluded to, that there are no inanimate things anywhere in nature. And not only is everything alive, but everything is in that state of tension of which I can only say that all things yearn toward me in a desire to penetrate to my intelligence. Everything is trying to speak to me. I cannot touch this point too often, it lies so close to the heart of this whole matter: nothing so trivial, so debased by everyday use, so buried under habitual sense reactions, but may put on life, in an hour like this,

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and speak direct to my intuitive perception. Behold the accidental pattern of my breakfast dishes piled in the dish drainer, with the interlacing arcs of its bowls and cups and saucers; the swirling reflections on the surface of a bowl of chocolate pudding I was just now stirring over the gas flame; the curve of the stem of a single yellow chrysanthemum in a plain glass holder against the light — all these things vibrate with the same life, all pronounce one warning syllable that wakes a muted string truer than intelligence.

And that syllable? I have tried again and again to spell it out, in this essay, one tentative letter at a time, testing the accuracy of it by the eye, by the ear, by heart and conscience; afraid of the power of words, in matters where language is only a remote intermediary, to bewitch both the speaker and the hearer. Great evocative phrases catch at my breath as I study my skeletal notes in the effort to reduce them to an honest and intelligible report. Representative images of flaming splendor strain against my caution, like horses breaking out of a corral. The temptation to use the strong and lovely phrases is very great: is it not a strong and lovely experience I am reporting? And who has signed me up to write a scientific diary, where the natural impulse is for the delight of release through any symbolical medium at my command? I might let myself out in a great drunken cry, like the man Tomas speaking in the pub, in James Stephens's poem: 'I saw God!' That would merely advise my readers — all except the few initiated — that I had some sort of inner experience that left a deep emotional track. But I undertook to reconstruct the event itself, to produce a seismographic tracing, as it were, of the inner excitement, which should serve as a check on my claims to a sort of clairvoyance that descends on me at times.

Of course the only conclusive proof of the actuality of such experiences, and of their worth, is to be sought in the afterlife of the subject — in modifications of personality and conduct. If something has happened in me that makes me a little less obtuse, a little less hard than I was by nature, my friends and neighbors would be the best witnesses to call. In an attempt to speak for myself — to communicate my discoveries, if discoveries they are, to persons who can have no personal contact with me — I am thrown back on the written word, with all its liability, in these matters outside the sphere of language, to suggest too much or too little or to fail altogether to cut a path in the reader's consciousness.

VII

What is the nature of the miracle that at certain times advises me to trim my lamp, for the bridegroom cometh; that shows me the bridegroom — if I have heeded the warning, by shaking off the dust of external activity — in the form of a world transfigured, drawn close in an all-embracing kinship? It seems to me, looking back to those exceptional moments, that I do not know what tenderness is except at such times. At the end of one of the seeming interludes of non-knowing, — which I suspect were only thinnings in sense-perception, — I was brought into contact with a small, repetitive, musical sound which at first was pure sound to me, without identity. A sweet, deliberate, tinkling note, over and over, coaxing me, admonishing, searching out my heart. Why was the effect intensified, instead of being dissolved in anticlimax, when I presently realized that I was listening to the drip-drip of the melting ice into the pan under the refrigerator? A warm tenderness not far from tears overflowed me entirely. I said a thing — whether vocally or not

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I do not know — that remains over, as summation and explanation sufficient for me who said it: *This is IT — This is IT;* and everything came close, everything was warm and dear. Sweet as absolution, a moment like that.

The finger of illumination seems to have touched almost everything in my small place, on the day of record. I omit this and that: it is not by bulk that my testimony is likely to convince. Occasionally I find a complete sentence, underlined in a way to indicate special stress of desire to preserve the significance behind the feeling of the moment. Thus: *The painted ship on the wall* IS *the ship; my outflow of poor words, barrier against meditation,* IS *my meditation.* Sometime in the course of the morning it rained. I find: *The uneven drumming of slowed-up rain on tin gutters: the voice of the holy silence of the farthest desert that ever instructed one of His prophets.*

So after all I have slipped into the use of an analogue too august by far for the slender thread of experience I can honestly claim. I am no prophet or initiate; I am less than a beginner in the mystic way. What have I to show as the fruits of my stumbling approach to contemplation that could be prefaced with an authoritative *thus saith the Lord?* Any adept who chances on these confessions will understand my predicament and view it with compassion. Here is a woman subject to minor degrees of elevation of consciousness for which common speech provides no name; obviously untrained in the inner techniques necessary to the development of her embryonic faculty; with only a thimbleful of information out of the vast ocean of recorded experience in the field of her tentative excursions; endowed with a dramatic imagination which shows her everything in a dazzling nimbus of implication and association; driven by the peculiar compulsion of the innately articulate to cry out to the world, *Behold a new thing!* — like a child seeing the moon for the first time — whenever a fresh experience, of whatever order, comes her way, while at the same time she is checked by a degree of scientific prudence which makes her fearful of overstating or misrepresenting — fearful of seeming to boast of eagle's wings, when she knows she has hardly a butterfly's power to rise above the ground.

This, I fancy, is how an initiate will read me. The beginners in the way, who are the ones most likely to pounce on a record like this, judging from my own responses, have now been warned against overestimating my contribution. At the same time, I must not disqualify myself unduly. Meagre and abortive as my experiences have been, they yet suffice to afford me first-hand knowledge of the nature and meaning of genuine mystical experience; of what happens, and how it feels, and what effect it may have on everyday life. In every field of human activity, even a little practice brings one closer to the heart of the matter than much information without practice. The nature of scientific method is clearer to me than to most laymen who read popular science, because I have sometimes assisted a naturalist in the field and in his laboratory, and to that extent experienced at first hand the rigor of the scientist's standards of truth, the humility of his subordination of personal desire to impersonal fact. A boy who has passed his first swimming test comes nearer to realizing how Gertrude Ederle felt midway of the English Channel than the most ardent fan who is up on the detailed histories of swimming champions but has never been in the water himself.

In the field of mysticism the gap between mere information and practice is even greater, because here we enter a mode of experience for which language

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was not made, as an expert has expressed it. The language of mysticism, it turns out, is a universal code, the key to which each aspirant has to find for himself in his own inner experience. The most expert instruction, the most clarifying commentary on the texts of mysticism, cannot put anyone in possession of the key: they only tell the seeker *where to look*. And the first genuine illumination crystallizes into a humble realization of one's ignorance. Says the author of *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, after years of more or less persistent seeking that brought him into contact with more advanced teachers than I have ever known: 'I knew little then, except by instinct, and to-day I have learned only the extent of my ignorance, but I know that even that is worth reporting, for others will take up the tale.'

VIII

What the programme note is to the symphony, the description of mystical experience is to the actuality. Even minor mystical experiences can only be annotated, they cannot be divulged. In my little sheaf of programme notes I have testified again and again to a feeling of being called, sought, reached out for, by the indwelling spirit of my several objects of contemplation. It is this sense of being summoned that inaugurates the series of flashes that I have ventured to call insights; and I felt the nature of the summons as *Receive me* into yourself and *know*.

Know what? What profit in the promised knowledge, were the promise capable of fulfillment? These are questions that never arise. It is a compulsion, not an argument, that procures my obedience to the nameless Ultimate that inhabits those fugitive moments; like the response of the grass blade to the sun that draws it up and up. A beneficent compulsion: for that which my spiritual tentacles touch, as I respond, feels good. By some such outstreaming influence, I suspect, the Holy Grail drew Galahad on and on. But this is again one of the superlative symbols I have forbidden myself. I have not gathered in the ocean; I have only dipped up a few drops in my cupped hands. Let me choose cautiously what name I give to the event.

It will be apparent to anyone reading this not too carelessly that in my testimony I seesaw between confidence and caution. I have absolute confidence in regard to the specific order of life my abortive experiences belong to; my doubts touch only my own attainments on that plane. Hence so many warnings to the reader, so many qualifying phrases snarling the smooth thread of assertion. And in my tendency to caution I find three distinct elements: the scientific — I have an inbred preference for accuracy; the ethical — one wants to be decently careful not to mislead the unwary, the less experienced; and the self-protective — I am afraid of the penalty for bearing false witness in these inmost things. I know intuitively that to be less than scrupulously truthful in speaking of those things would be to block my own progress. The false Messiah is the chief victim of his own deception. The magnificent abnegation of Krishnamurti will have raised him to a higher spiritual pinnacle, in the end, than a world-wide following could secure to him, on any basis less than the truth as *he* saw it.

One's immediate perception of what takes place in those transcendent moments proves to be as unstable as a cloud in a windy sky when the time comes to peg down the vision for inspection. 'What can be described and handed down is not the vision itself,' writes that expert, Dean Inge, 'but the inadequate symbols in which the seer tries to preserve it in his memory.' Is there nothing, then, that I can guaran-

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tee as to the value of my transcription? any reason why a serious reader should pay attention to me? Here is a test the reader himself must apply: If I am not deluded, — if something does happen to me, on occasions such as the one described, different from everyday experience, — my fumbling for the revealing word, the illuminating symbol, will be sure to hit on something of intrinsic veracity; some fresh phrase, some metaphor newborn from the shock of spontaneous discovery; some novel application of a familiar parable, some inevitable paradox. Sincerity, fortunately, has an accent of its own; a genuine experience sooner or later supplies the witness with the one unmistakable certifying word. Like the olive leaf brought back by Noah's dove, my flight of symbols, if they were wrought out in genuine experience, will guarantee that I have touched, however briefly, a recovered land.

For myself, ever on my guard against self-deception, — for I know too well the possibilities for unconscious spiritual posturing in imitation of models assimilated through reading and reflection, — I have yet another sign. I have learned that the puny flights of the novice are part ache, part exaltation. The exaltation may be induced by imitative experience, too; by the emotional contagion of a collective exercise in prayer or meditation, for instance. The genuine mystical flight, with a beginner like me, leaves an ache behind — the ache of incompleteness, which is most keenly felt on the path to completeness. I know I have not really been over the horizon. My fleeting glimpses into the heart of things, the nostalgic sweetness of my moments of absorption into the world about me, the thrill of the soundless trumpet summoning me to cross the barrier of sense — all these are only the faintest tremblings of the Veil in the inconstant breath of my too feeble aspiration. I know what to look for, but I have not seen it.

> Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
> And who shall stand in his holy place?

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EDUCATING THE GIFTED BOY

BY FREDERICK WINSOR

I

WHEN Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence he wrote into it, as what he called a self-evident truth, the statement that all men are created equal. That was in the early summer of 1776. At some time during the following winter, this same Mr. Jefferson advocated in the Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia the adoption of a plan of public education which he had drawn up and which he presented for consideration. This plan of education was based on the assumption that young people vary widely in intellectual gifts, some being born with a far greater aptitude for learning than others. The plan, in short, repudiated the doctrine that all men are created equal. Unfortunately enormous publicity has been given to Mr. Jefferson's original statement, and very little to his repudiation of it. The persistence of the wholly untenable doctrine of the equality of man has caused no end of mischief in many fields of our national life, and nowhere has the mischief been greater than in the field of education.

The self-evident truth is that, intellectually, all men are not born equal. Passing over the imbeciles and the morons who are born that way, every one of us is aware that among his friends and acquaintances is to be found the most extraordinary variety of mental gifts, and that this variety is the result, not of varying educational advantages, but of innate personal qualities, inherited or originated at birth. Children of the same parents, brothers and sisters who have had identical schooling, show these variations again and again. Everyone recognizes them among his friends. We express the broader contrasts by calling people we know either clever or dull, and we use those words not so much in praise or reproach as to express talent given or withheld by a power over which the individual has no control. The talent is there, or it is not there, through no fault of his. I say we recognize this situation ourselves, as individuals, yet as a community we have resolutely shut our eyes to it, and have built up a system of public and private education which could only be justified if all the pupils were of equal scholastic aptitude.

It is a matter of experience, however, that boys and girls of school and college age show wide differences of intellectual capacity. Those at the top of the scale have brains well worth training, while those at the bottom of the scale have practically no brains at all and can only memorize; thinking is out of their power.

This distinction between thinking and memorizing, or learning, is a very important one, and I shall revert to it later. It is sufficient to point out here that the three R's, which give us the tools of everyday life, can be ac-

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quired with merely the most rudimentary processes of thought, and practically without reasoning at all. The fact that plenty of people can read who cannot understand a word of what they are reading, and that we have machines for both writing and calculating which are far neater and more exact than any human being could ever be, bears out this contention. The work of the first six grades of our public schools is almost wholly of such a character. Successfully to complete it demands not brains but memory and application and drill. To admit to those grades both the brilliant and the dull, and to teach them both together, mingled in the same classes, is not especially unjust to either group, for the brilliant sometimes have poor memories and the dull sometimes have good ones.

As a boy I used to drive a horse which shied violently at a certain spot in the road for months after he had once been frightened there by a piece of newspaper blown at him by a gust of wind. The horse is an animal with a good memory, but no brains. He can be trained, he can learn, but he cannot think. There are plenty of human beings whose mental equipment is not dissimilar. In comparing them with the horse I am more polite than is customary.

II

I have said that the three R's can be acquired by all children who are not feeble-minded, and that no great harm is done to the gifted children by herding all in the same classes, and probably such an arrangement can continue through the sixth grade of our schools without serious injustice to anyone, but with the seventh grade, and from then on through the high school and through the university, such a mingling of the bright and the dull in the same classrooms, *without any other provision for the training of the bright*, is an educational crime of the first magnitude. In no other country in the world, so far as I know, is it ever attempted, and the only reason it is done in America is that the public, which pays the bills, believes that its children are all born equal, and none, therefore, should be given educational advantages which are not open to all.

The result of this demand for higher education for all has been that the junior high school and the high school and the college have all three been forced to adapt their courses of study and their methods of instruction to the horde of pupils who can only memorize and cannot think, and this adaptation has already been almost fatal to the quality of American public secondary and college education. I refer not merely to the multiplication of commercial and domestic science courses, such as journalism, stenography, housekeeping, dietetics, folk dancing, and physical training. Not one teaches the pupils to reason. They can all be mastered by the use of the memory, and their presence in the curricula of schools and colleges is explained by the presence in the student bodies of pupils who have not the power to think. These pupils, being in the schools and the colleges, have to be provided with courses which they can handle, so that they may be able to accumulate the necessary credits to enable them first to enter college and then to obtain their college degrees. In a generation or so we shall all understand what such a degree means, and no harm would be done if that were all.

But, emphatically, that is not all. Just as a large part of the population of our high schools is sent there by parents who completely misapprehend the nature of the learning process and expect that their children will graduate with a guarantee from the state that they are better educated than was

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Abraham Lincoln, who did not have their advantages, so the children themselves, dimly realizing that the vocational and commercial courses which I have mentioned do not train the mind, enroll in large numbers in the various subjects of study which have always been the medium of sound intellectual discipline. They present themselves as candidates for instruction in the languages, in mathematics, in science, and in the so-called social studies of history, psychology, and government. More than one half of them, at the most conservative estimate, can do no more than memorize facts about these subjects, for it is quite beyond their powers to think or to reason, and their teachers are faced with the problem of reducing the subject matter of every high-school course and of every popular college course to such a form that it can be memorized and reproduced without demanding cerebration on the pupil's part.

As a result, we find exactly what we should expect to find. The old, stern disciplines of grammar, algebra, geometry, Latin, Greek, history, and what used to be called 'natural philosophy' have had to be abandoned. No teacher can face the music of an outraged association of parents if he or she has failed to give passing grades to half of a class in algebra. The only way out for the teacher has been to debase the requirements, and no longer attempt to teach the old testing, power-giving, challenging curriculum which high-school pupils had to face and master a generation or two ago. The names of the old subjects, most of them, remain, but they have been sadly emasculated. The teacher and the textbook now do for the pupil all the thinking that needs to be done in connection with these simplified subjects. Even the study of literature can be passed by any child who can remember what teacher said ought to be thought.

III

Let me repeat that this situation is precisely what was to be expected when the high-school population ceased to be a selected group. If every young person is entitled to be educated at the expense of the state up to twenty or twenty-two years of age, and if all must be educated in the same classes for fear lest a favored few shall obtain a better education than others, then the subject matter must be adapted to the bottom 10 per cent of the pupils. I can see no help for it. Here and there devoted teachers will be found who will give extra time and attention to the brighter pupils, and try to provide them with mental pabulum into which they can get their teeth, but such efforts can be only sporadic, and in the main the minds of the gifted pupils will grow dull, their vision will become blurred, and hundreds of thousands of the potential thinkers of the next generation will acquire the habit of looking to others to do their thinking and form their opinions for them. A democracy needs, above everything else, a sturdy, independent electorate, which does its own thinking, and does it straight, and is not to be bamboozled by specious sophistries. Failing such an electorate, it needs, and needs desperately, the sound leadership of fearless, straight-thinking men and women. How can we reintroduce into our system of education, at least for those pupils who can profit by it, the old training in accurate thinking and close reasoning?

I believe such a training for the more gifted pupils can be provided, and without arousing the protests of the excluded, but before elaborating my suggestion I should like to consider for a few moments some fundamental factors of the situation, and also its treatment in other lands. I shall try not to be either too technical or too diffuse.

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In the first place, what do I mean by gifted boys and girls, and how is anyone to tell such boys and girls from the others who are not gifted? Boys and girls, when they are washed and brushed and tidied up, look pretty much alike.

Well, I mean, by 'gifted,' endowed with superior intellectual capacity. When such an endowment is backed by character and ambition we have a child of great promise, who, with adequate training, may possibly become a leader in the intellectual life of his time. Such a youngster is the sort of material from which scholars, jurists, physicians, theologians, scientists, and statesmen can be made — men who are the thinkers of their generation. I have no means to suggest for the testing of character and ambition except to say that hardships and the necessity of overcoming obstacles are essential factors in the development of both character and ambition, and that an education which presents no obstacles and is shorn of difficulty is as poor an education as I can imagine for the gifted child from the point of view of its effect on his character.

But though there is no test which can be set to five hundred children with the result that they can then be graded accurately on the score of character, tests have been worked out which make it possible to rate such a group quite accurately on the score of their intellectual promise and their intellectual equipment for succeeding in academic competition. It is safe to say that if such a test is given to any class above the fifth grade in any school, and from the scores the top 20 per cent are selected, the most promising 10 per cent of the class, intellectually, will all be included. In other words, in any individual one of these tests a child might, through illness or carelessness, not do his best and slip somewhat seriously in his rating, but not enough to put him down to the twenty-first place if he belongs at the tenth. I am interested in providing a real scholastic training for the top 10 per cent of our children, and I believe that if we provide such a training for the top 15 or 20 per cent, chosen by tests already available, we shall not miss any of those gifted children whom society cannot afford to neglect.

In other countries the public attitude of the community toward education is in astounding contrast to ours. In Germany, Switzerland, and France, no one thinks of higher education as a thing that could be given to everybody, or that ought to be given without cost to anybody. Everyone is given a chance to learn to read and write and cipher, at the public expense, but the schools which correspond to our high schools are open only to a selected group, who have qualified for entrance by passing special examinations. Frequently, those who do brilliantly in these examinations are awarded free scholarships, but in the main an annual tuition fee is required of every pupil, so that the public high schools are supported partly by general taxes and partly by these tuition fees. It is to be noted that the admission examinations serve not only to keep unfit pupils from cluttering up the classrooms and ruining the standards of instruction, but also to ensure that the taxpayers' money is not wasted in trying to make silk purses out of sows' ears.

The greatest contrast, however, is found not in the attitude of the public but in the attitude of the teachers. All over western Europe you will find the teachers concentrating their attention on their bright pupils. In America we teach for the bottom 10 per cent; in Europe they teach for the top 10 per cent. A teacher here is concerned for the dull pupil, and moves heaven and earth to ensure his promotion. I think we feel that if we can teach the

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dull the bright will learn anyway. In Europe the teacher whose pupils win honors in academic competitions is the one who ranks high in his profession.

The same general attitude of mind prevails in England. There, again, the teaching is aimed at the top of each class, and if the dullards cannot grasp what is going on it is of no concern to the teacher, who deals out punishments but does not interrupt an interesting discussion to meet the needs of some lad who will never be a scholar anyway. Hence, the teaching in an English classroom is concerned with thinking and reasoning, with analysis and argument and criticism, rather than with matters which can be memorized and reproduced. Furthermore, no one 'graduates' from one of the great English schools. Those boys who have done well — less than half — go on to the universities, and the others take up the work of life, and they take it up without a school diploma. When people compare English and American university freshmen, as they so often do, to our disparagement, they speak truthfully enough, but they seldom explain that the English university man is a picked product, the intellectual flower of a system which ruthlessly cuts off the unpromising buds for the very purpose of developing the finest possible blooms.

IV

In our own country, in recent years, a number of experiments have been tried, all intended to provide a better training for our brighter pupils. Honor sections, 'projects,' promotion by subjects, and various other plans have been tried and are being tried. In New York City a special high school has been assigned solely to bright students whose tests and records show them to be unusually promising. I expect that in a few years there will be available some very interesting statistics about the achievements of the graduates of that school, but the plan is obviously only possible in a large city having several high schools. The drawback to some of these experiments is that they are expensive, and our public is jealous of the expenditure of considerable sums on the education of a small group. Before much progress can be made in that direction, the public must be brought to realize that there is actually no expenditure of public money which would be more advantageous to the nation than that which would provide for such an education of our unusually promising children as would secure the highest possible cultivation of their thinking and reasoning powers.

We are confronted, then, with this problem: how to provide the most promising 20 per cent of the pupils in our schools with training in what we may call straight thinking, without excessive outlay, without a greatly increased teaching staff, without setting them apart as an obviously favored group, and without sacrificing any of the real values contained in their present class work. If the problem can be solved, it should ensure the graduation each year, from every high school numbering two thousand pupils, of about one hundred young people who have been really trained to use their own minds. In thirty years the town containing that high school would have three thousand citizens between the ages of twenty and fifty who would have not only the ability to think straight and independently but the habit of doing so. Any community with three thousand such citizens would be fortunate.

Like any other skill, skill in thinking can only be obtained by practice, and the practice must be done under expert supervision, with just enough explanation and analysis of the process to ensure correct form. In planning an edu-

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cation for gifted children, therefore, the basic principle must be to provide for such practice. My plan is simply to provide for the top 20 per cent of every class extra time to be devoted to two essential purposes: first, this practice in thinking which will promote skill in the art; second, making the acquaintance of what the great thinkers of the past have thought and written down.

To anyone familiar with the crowded programme of our secondary schools, the proposal to provide extra time for anything more must sound, at first blush, preposterous, but I think that for gifted pupils it can be done simply and easily, without sacrificing any of the values of the curriculum and without inflicting the slightest hardship on the gifted pupils themselves.

In grades seven to twelve of our schools, a typical programme calls for slightly over twenty periods a week of recitations which require, on the average, something more than twenty periods of outside preparation. The bright child spends not more than half the time on preparing his lessons that the dull one has to spend, yet forty-two periods a week, seven a day, is surely no more than is good for anyone; indeed it ought to be required of any child who has a real ambition to acquire an education. We can assume, then, that our gifted pupil has ten periods of preparation time which he does not now need, and which he might, to his great advantage, devote to the special training I am proposing.

Moreover, the gifted pupil does not need the same amount of time for drilling and testing in his regular curriculum which the other pupils require. I propose that he shall be excused from one recitation period out of four, in each of his major subjects, and that the five periods so gained shall be devoted to our extra course in the art of thinking. Time for the necessary reading and outside preparation for the course is easily available from the ten periods a week which the gifted pupil now has free. In this way, during the last six grades of the school curriculum, five periods a week of class work and nearly ten periods a week of required reading and preparation are available, and a well-rounded, graded, continuous course, involving six consecutive years of study with a recitation period every day in the week, could be worked out.

The pupils to be privileged to take this course would be picked at the end of the sixth-grade year or at the beginning of the seventh, by means of one of the available standardized tests in which vocabulary and reading ability would play a large part, and mathematical talent a smaller one. Those who rated in the top 20 per cent would be selected and given a trial. That would give a section numbering twenty pupils from each room of one hundred, and one teacher could handle four such groups in each grade. The testing of the children is an easy matter, and the grading of such tests is wholly mechanical, so that personal favoritism and partiality would be eliminated. A practical, effective way of selecting the gifted pupils has, in short, already been worked out. It might result in the inclusion of a few who would find the course beyond their powers, and possibly, here and there, a gifted child would be overlooked. Taken all in all, however, it should be possible to set up our course with a very satisfactory selection of pupils.

V

Having established the group, what should we teach them, and how should we teach it? Since thinking has to be done by means of words combined into sentences, and since accurate thinking requires the use of words in their exact meanings and sentences free from any

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ambiguity, I should say that the foundation of our course should be the study of the meanings of words and the structure of sentences. Since, also, close reasoning must be free from fallacies, I should add to the study of words and sentences the study of the laws of sound and exact reasoning. Next, I should have these children study the nature and method of mathematical reasoning, in regard to numbers, to surfaces, and to measurement or comparison of the various kinds of quantities. Next I should have them consider the purpose, the nature, the laws, and the ethics, of various human activities, such as business, government, and human life.

You will notice that in thus outlining a course of study I have avoided using the name of any one of the recognized subjects of study, yet I might have outlined the course by using the old familiar names, for the study of the meanings of words and the structure of sentences is grammar and rhetoric, the study of reasoning is logic, of mathematical reasoning and measurement is arithmetic, algebra, or geometry, according to the field involved. In our school and college courses, the purpose, nature, laws, and ethics of our various human activities are studied under the names of economics, civics, government, philosophy, and ethics. The reason I have avoided using these well-worn names is that they inevitably would paint a picture of a course of study utterly different from the one I have in mind. I wish, in this practice in learning to think straight, to avoid as poison the aim of amassing facts, and to concentrate on ideas, and purposes, and reasons.

Take, for example, the study of government. In my freshman year in college I took a course called Government I. During the college year we took up, one after another, the forms of government then prevailing in the United States, England, France, Germany, and Switzerland. It was an eminently practical course, and required the memorizing of an enormous number of facts. We had to know, at the end of the year, for instance, the qualifications for membership in the senior and junior branches of the different legislative bodies in all those countries, and the methods of election, as well as the duration in office of the different members. The structure of the various judicial bodies, their powers, and their limitations, even their salaries, were supposed to be learned and remembered, ready for reproduction when called for in an examination. We were held responsible for comparisons between governments in respect to all sorts of details, and especially we had to learn all sorts of things about the varying rights of, and qualifications for, citizenship.

Now that course left out most of the things about government which seem to me interesting and valuable, and insisted on a thousand details no one of which has any real importance at all. If we want to think about government, it seems to me that the first point would be the purposes for which governments exist, the extent to which it is important to sacrifice individual freedom for the public good, and the obligations which a citizen owes his government in return for the benefits received. It is the philosophy and ethics of government, wherever we may find it, that are important and that can be remembered, not the number of congressional districts in the State of Michigan or the number of *arrondissements* in the department of the Eure.

VI

It would be possible to contrast similarly every one of the recognized school subjects which I have mentioned with the corresponding field of study

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which I dream of for the gifted boy, but my allotment of space is limited. I have said enough, I hope, to make it clear that my projected course is to be in complete contrast to all the other school courses of study. They are all good, all valuable, all worth-while, and I am not attacking any of them, but they are all factual subjects. The pupil studies them for the definite purpose of mastering the facts which they present, of language, mathematics, science, or what not, since he is going to need these facts in his later life or his later education. In connection with them, examinations are a natural necessity, for the teacher must make sure that the pupils are accumulating the facts.

From this task of amassing facts I would set free the gifted pupil for five periods a week in order not to amass any more facts but to learn how to think with his mind. If he learns anything it will not be facts but the principles which underlie human life and conduct. All the facts which he may learn in his other courses he will forget unless he uses them frequently, but one does not forget how life works, how human beings behave, or what constitutes a valid argument. Since there is no danger that these selected pupils will forget, therefore, there will be no examinations in my course and no grades.

But there will be a great deal of collateral reading. Straight through the six years the pupils will be learning not only to think but also what the greatest leaders of human thought, down through recorded history, have themselves thought. An average of twenty pages a lesson of selected classics, five periods a week for six years, would make over 20,000 pages. Taken from selected authors from Confucius to Benjamin Franklin, or even to one of the stimulating thinkers of our own time, 20,000 pages of live philosophy would provide a good liberal education in itself.

Such is my suggestion. I believe it eminently practical, and it requires no expensive apparatus, no rows of lathes or batteries of cookstoves. Since the number of pupils involved is small, they can be taken care of by a very few additional teachers. They would lose none of the valuable instruction which they now receive, for experience has shown that a really bright pupil may lose two or three consecutive weeks of school through illness and be back at the head of his class again within ten days after his return. In the place of one period out of every four of his regular recitations, my proposal would give to the gifted and promising pupil an opportunity to exercise and stretch his mind, his reasoning and thinking powers.

What would be the result of training our ablest pupils to think and ingraining in them the habit of independent thinking; what would be the effect on their attitude toward their other studies and especially their college courses; what would happen to their powers of criticism and analysis as the result of some acquaintance with the reservoirs of human thought now almost completely withheld from most of them; and what kind of citizens and neighbors and husbands and fathers a systematic consideration of the ethics of business, government, and human conduct would produce, I cannot tell you. Confucius said, 'Moral virtue simply consists in being able, anywhere and everywhere, to exercise five particular qualities: self-respect, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness, and benevolence.' It seems to me that the liberal education which I have tried to describe might very possibly be of considerable power in promoting those five qualities. Let us consider them in order. Self-respect is surely promoted both by learning to face and welcome

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the truth, whatever it may be, and by working, daily, up to our best powers. Magnanimity is an almost universal characteristic of really deep thinkers. Sincerity would inevitably be developed by practice in honest search for honest argument. Earnestness is best promoted by daily meeting a challenge which demands the exercise of our best powers. And benevolence is the sure result of the understanding of the ethics and philosophy of the common life of mankind. I do not see how the course of study which I have outlined could fail to quicken the moral perceptions of the boys and girls who take it, or fail to improve the quality of their moral fibre.

At the level of university and graduate-school training there is in America no neglect of the gifted student. Provision has been made for his training and for the utilization of his special talents by the establishment of fellowships, the endowment of research institutes and projects, and the creation of a multitude of competitive scholarships in our colleges everywhere. For the discovery and training at the secondary-school level of boys of outstanding promise who may afterwards fill the fellowships and scholarships so provided, almost nothing is being done. We are building the top of an educational pyramid without giving thought to the base on which it must stand. I believe our country owes it to itself to stop paying little or no attention to the special education of its most promising boys and girls. In them lies the hope of the future. Four fifths of us, perhaps a larger proportion, are unable to do serious thinking of any kind. The gifted fifth, who alone have the capacity, must be trained to do our thinking for us. They are not to-day being so trained, but I submit that they might be.

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SHARE-CROPPING IN THE DELTA

BY DAVID L. COHN

I

A FEW months ago some of the newspapers and magazines of the country carried a startling photograph of a plump, middle-aged woman holding her skirts high above her knees. On her white thigh flowered a great black bruise. The woman, identified as 'Miss Willie Sue Blagden, socialite and social worker of Memphis,' said that she had been flogged by cotton farmers near Earl, Arkansas, because of her presumed sympathies with the aims and activities of the Southern Farm Tenants' Union.

For two years the Arkansas Delta — an area of large cotton plantations — has been the scene of conflict between farmers and agents of the Union who have sought to organize share-croppers and obtain higher wages and shorter hours for farm laborers. There have been actual and alleged floggings of the Union's agents. Some have been put in jail. Others have been run out of the community. There have been on both sides the bitter charges usual in labor conflicts; shots fired at midnight; espionage; lawsuits; investigations by the press; newsreel pictures; radio talks; and, lately, the injection into the fray of the United Mine Workers, under the leadership of John L. Lewis, as an ally of the Union. Norman Thomas was forcibly prevented by farmers from addressing share-croppers at Birdsong, Arkansas. A government report was made on the situation, but it has never been released. So-called liberal publications in the North have treated of conditions in the cotton fields of Arkansas in the language and temper of the Abolitionists of Boston in 1858. Conservative newspapers in the South have dismissed the work of the Union as the 'efforts of paid Communist agitators.'

It is impossible within the limits of this article to consider the manifold complexities of share-cropping even within a limited region. A complete consideration would involve questions of taxes, interest, the price the farmer receives for cotton, the prices he pays for the things he buys, the immense amount of hand labor essential to growing cotton, export markets, tariffs, competition with foreign cotton growers, and the extraordinary difficulties of the race question. This discussion is limited, therefore, to a consideration merely of some phases of the share-cropping system as it is practised in the Arkansas and Mississippi Deltas. These sections are so similar in every respect that they may be considered as one. For purposes of brevity they will be alluded to as the Delta.

This area is a land of large plantations. The soil is perhaps the richest in the world, having been built up through countless ages by alluvial deposits of the Mississippi River and by the decay of leaf mould from the dense forest that covered it. It is deep, flat, free of rocks

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or stones, blessed with abundant sun and rain, and fabulously fertile. The cotton yield is about three times higher than the average for the South, and the staple grown is of such high quality that it commands a special price premium in the markets of the world.

The Delta is a country of blazing suns, torrential rains, and heavy dews; of the great river and many lesser rivers; of dark snake-infested swamps, loud with the croakings of frogs and the lonely cries of owls; of green storm clouds scudding above green fields, and tumbled masses of cumulus clouds flecked with the black of buzzards' wings; of white glaring summers and purple-tinted autumns; of tiny cabins lost on the vast plains; of mules and Negroes and endless turnrows and singing voices praising the tenderness of sweet Jesus, who one day will enfold all of God's creatures in His arms.

It is a land, too, of peace and savage violence; of swift changes from prosperity to poverty; of churchgoing and whiskey drinking; of kindness and cruelty; of hard work and prodigal leisure; of hospitality and feudalism; of good manners and isolation.

Cotton is the single money crop, and cotton growing is more than a way of earning a living. It is a form almost of religion. The Delta farmer does not desire to make more money in order, like the Iowa farmer, to retire to California, but in order to buy more land to grow more cotton. Sometimes this desire becomes a pathological obsession; always it is deep within the blood.

There are relatively few white share-croppers in the Delta, but their numbers are growing. Year by year they come down from their sterile hills, attracted by the rich lands of the Delta. These share-croppers are of pure Anglo-Saxon stock, Protestant, ignorant, poor, violent, difficult to deal with, fanatically religious, and filled with a blazing hatred for Negroes and upper-class whites. They are not wanted now in the Delta, as they were not wanted on the large plantations of the South prior to the Civil War. None the less, they continue to filter in, and as their numbers increase new problems will be created. There is an essential conflict of temperament and point of view between these people and the landowning whites of the Delta, and the conflict is especially bitter between poor whites and Negroes. It is to be observed that this conflict does not prevail in the case of non-Anglo-Saxon white share-croppers, such as Italians or Scandinavians. These are welcomed both by the planters and by the Negroes.

II

Negroes constitute a vast majority of the population of the Delta, averaging about 70 per cent of the whole. They are, with some exceptions, ignorant, superstitious, given to magic and outbursts of violence, cheerful, patient, thriftless, teeming with sexual diseases, suspicious of both whites and blacks, orgiastically religious, and completely amoral.

The Delta Negro pays lip service to the Christianity of the white folks, but the tribal gods of magic claim his deepest devotion. Negro hoodoo doctors ply their profession in the towns, and their clientele is large among the blacks there as well as on the plantations. If business is bad, a doctor may sometimes take to the road in search of clients, and recently one of them came to Trail Lake Plantation. He went into the mule lot where Galley, the hostler, was at work.

'Good mawnin',' said the doctor. 'How is you, Galley?'

'How you know my name?' inquired the hostler. 'I ain't never seed you befo'. You 's strange aroun' here.'

'Humph!' snorted the doctor. 'How I know yo' name? It ain't nuthin' I does n't know.' He looked cautiously

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around the lot. Then he whispered in Galley's ear: 'I'se a two-headed man.'

'Is you?' said Galley, looking at him suspiciously. 'If you is, how come you wearing overhalls like a plain field nigger?'

'Nigger, ain't you got no sense?' replied the doctor. 'If I was wearin' my Sunday clothes de white folks might catch me and run me clean to Vicksburg. Dis way I'm jest a lonesome nigger looking for a job. Now what I wants to ax you is dis: has you got any money?' Galley said that he had five dollars. 'Well, den,' resumed the doctor, 'it ain't nuthin' for a two-headed man from Algiers like me to fix it up for you so soon's you walk in de store Mr. Gay Coleman will come up to you widout no word on yo' part and say, "Galley, does you want twenty-five dollars in cash or groceries?"'

The doctor got the five dollars and walked out of the mule lot, looking like a lonesome Negro hunting for a job. Galley sulked impatiently through the day until the mules had been brought to the lot at sundown. Then he went to the store. Mr. Gay Coleman was so busy weighing coffee and sugar for the coming Saturday business that he did not even glance at Galley. The hostler leaned against the counter and picked his teeth with a knife blade. He ate a can of sardine-fish with enormous deliberation and mental concentration. He bought a bottle of pop from Mr. Mac and drank it slowly, shaking the bottle before each swallow in order to create a bit of foam and thus prolong the time of drinking it. At nine o'clock, as Mr. Gay Coleman was preparing to close the store for the night, he seemed to become for the first time aware of the hostler's existence. 'Galley,' he said, 'tell all the niggers at the lot to be here first thing in the morning to get their second typhoid shot when Dr. Shackleford comes out from town.'

'Yassuh,' replied Galley. The store doors closed. Galley walked sadly down the big road in the white moonlight stirring tiny clouds of dust with his shuffling feet.

Family life, in the sense that white men know it, is almost nonexistent among rural Delta Negroes. A man 'marries' a woman simply by living with her. He divorces her merely by leaving her. Customs die hard. Not long ago, on Deep Snow plantation, a young Negro girl came to tell her grandmother that she was going to get married with a courthouse license, a preacher, a ring bearer, and all the rest, just like the white folks. The old woman snorted in disgust. 'Is you chillun done gone crazy?' she asked. 'Me and yo' grandpappy made us first crop together fifty years ago, and us ain't never had no cote-house license, neither a ring bearer. Us made many a crop an' fit many a time an' loved each other good and he ain't never had no other 'oman, neither I another man. You don't need no highfalutin' cote-house license. Dat's for white folks. Jes' git you a good strong nigger an' go 'head 'bout yo' business.'

A single household may contain five or six children born of various mothers and fathers, yet all dwell in peace. Rural Negroes are fond of children and treat them with great kindness. Negro orphans are unknown; they are gladly adopted by friends or relatives.

The Delta Negro's sex life is a long moral holiday. He is bound by no conventions and circumscribed by no laws. He is sexually free and untrammeled and has a maxim which pithily expresses his point of view about physical love: 'It's good; I likes it, and I'm gwine to git me some mo' of it.'

He is, however, sometimes savagely jealous, and is then swift to kill. Every cabin contains one or more rifles, pistols, or shotguns, and the women, who are as deadly as the men, carry ice picks which they use with unerring ac-

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curacy. Murders and assaults are so common among plantation Negroes that they arouse only passing comment among the whites and are simply the subject of excited gossip for a day or two among Negroes. Recently a Negro woman walked up the road on Bridal Wreath plantation with her four children. Her husband walked rapidly behind her, swinging an axe. He caught up with her, forced her to kneel on the road, and severed her head from her body. Then he stood by quietly until the plantation manager came to take him to jail. Why had he killed the woman? 'She was talking under her clothes wid dat harp-blowing nigger from Rolling Fork.' If the murderer goes to the penitentiary it will be only for a short term. When he is released he will take his place in the community without loss of prestige and with an aura of heroism and adventure about him.

The Delta Negro, with few exceptions, is utterly thriftless. Yesterday is vaguely remembered. To-day is bright reality. To-morrow may never come. It is for white folks whose lives in the present are poisoned by forebodings of the morrow to burden themselves with insurance and pensions and old-age security legislation. For the Negro, to-morrow is merely an atom of time which some day will burst in a magnificent multicolored explosion, revealing sweet Jesus on His throne. And, because there is no future, it is utterly senseless to save money for it. Money is acquired to spend — not to save. At 'settlement time' in November or December, when croppers receive their share of the proceeds of the cotton crop, most of them immediately spend the fruits of a year's labor on secondhand automobiles, gasoline, gambling, whiskey, or aimlessly and gayly traveling about the countryside. They will buy anything that is offered for sale, however useless, ranging from pianos to sets of gold teeth, sometimes diamond-encrusted. Then they will go along with little or no money for the next nine months, secure in their belief that the white man will somehow provide for them.

The curse of the white man's relations with the Delta Negro is not his alleged brutality, — a charge which is rarely true, — but his paternalism. The paternalism of the Delta planter is a surviving remnant of ante-bellum *noblesse oblige*, plus his profound belief that the Negro is a helpless and amusing child. The planter does not insist that the Negro stand on his own feet. He does not condemn him to starvation or nakedness if he fails to measure up to the stern standards of competition that exist among whites. When times are hard, the first thought of a harassed planter is to borrow money 'to take care of my niggers.' If a Negro gambles away in a night his earnings of a year and must be supported for nine months, the planter curses him with magnificent fury and picturesqueness. He swears that he will let him starve and lie naked to the winds of winter. He tells him that he is the most no-'count, jug-headed, trifling nigger that ain't got the sense of a mule, and hanging is far too good for him. The Negro humbly bows his head and looks the picture of sorrowful repentance. But when he leaves the planter's store he goes out with a sack or two of corn meal and a slab of salt meat, slings them over the rump of his mud-bespattered mule, and rides cheerfully homeward.

If the Delta Negro ever had a desire to stand on his own feet, it has been utterly sapped by the paternalism of the whites. This attitude — springing largely from motives of kindness — has been extremely costly both materially and spiritually to the whites and the Negroes of the region. It is merciful in that it evades the horrors of the dog-eat-dog attitude sometimes

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prevailing in the industrial regions. But if the rural Negro is ever to arrive at economic manhood he must learn to forgo the soft pleasures of paternalism.

The Delta Negro is amazingly cheerful in adversity and patient in misfortune. He knows how to laugh. Negro laughter is quite unlike white laughter. 'I teaches my children to laugh,' said a wise old Negro schoolteacher to me. 'Long as they can laugh they 'll get along all right.' Cheerfulness, patience, and good humor are qualities which are a vital part of the Negro's genius for survival, and without them he would long ago have vanished. Living in a dominant white society, hedged about with numerous taboos, subject to unwritten and unwritable conventions imposed by the whites, he quickly learns how to assay the white man. He knows instinctively who is weak and who firm; who is determined and who vacillating; who is kind and who cruel. Living in an alien world dominated economically and socially by the whites, the Negro learns in childhood to read them almost at a glance, and to adapt himself with the fluidity of water to the personality with which he is momentarily in contact.

Delta Negroes are a people without a culture. This is readily understandable in the light of their American experience. Negroes came to this country with many African cultures. They were sold as slaves and dispersed. On ante-bellum plantations they often could not converse with each other until they had acquired English as a common tongue. Their blood was mixed with the blood of blacks from every part of Africa and whites of every kind from every part of the United States. Long ago they lost their tribal cultures. They have now no memories of their homeland; no native crafts or arts. They have not acquired the culture of the whites, but merely ape their worst qualities. And, as the actions of the leaders and the people of half the world prove, the white man at his worst outdoes any other man in barbarism and brutality.

III

White farmers of the Delta are in origin roughly of two kinds: those who are descendants of ante-bellum slave owners, and those who are descendants of overseers, artisans, and small landowners. The former tend to treat Negroes with every consideration of fairness; the latter are likely to be harsh and unfair to Negroes.

The social structure of the Delta, so far as share-cropping is concerned, is composed of the following elements: —

(*a*) White farmers descended from slave owners.

(*b*) White farmers whose grandfathers and fathers were overseers for slave owners or for their sons, or else were store managers or artisans.

(*c*) White share-croppers. They are a minority in the Delta and are filled with a bitter hatred for upper-class whites and for Negroes.

(*d*) Negro landowners. Thousands of acres of land are owned by Negro farmers who in turn have Negro share-croppers upon their land. These croppers complain of their exploitation at the hands of their richer brothers.

(*e*) Negro share-croppers. They have an immense contempt and scorn for white share-croppers, whom they call 'po' white trash.' They do not trust any man, white or Negro.

It remains to be inquired: What is share-cropping? How does it function?

The share-cropping relationship commonly comes about in this way. At any time between November and February a Negro, hat in hand, will enter the office of a farmer in his plantation store. He would like to 'take up some land.' The farmer makes a few inquiries about his prior abodes, the size of his family, and whether he has any mules or tools.

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Usually the applicant has nothing to offer save the labor of himself and his family. His possessions consist of a few clothes, some bedding and pieces of rickety furniture, a mail-order catalogue, a Bible (often illustrated with drawings of black angels seated at the foot of the white and dazzling throne of Jesus), a flea-bitten rabbit dog, a chromo of Daniel in the Lions' Den, and a membership in a burial society.

The cropper (and his family) must be given shelter, food, clothing, and medical services from the time that he comes to the plantation — say, in November — until the following August, when cotton picking is started and money begins to come in. A deal is struck. It follows the pattern used since 1865. The farmer agrees to furnish without charge the following things: a cabin, fuel (to be cut by the cropper from the farmer's woods), water, a garden patch, seed, mules, tools, and land for making a crop. He agrees also to furnish the cropper with food and clothing in stipulated amounts.

The cropper undertakes to cultivate the land under the farmer's supervision; to turn over to him for rent half of the corn and cotton grown; and to repay the sums advanced in the form of food, clothing, and medical services. Whatever remains (if anything) is his net earnings for the year over and above his subsistence.

Share-cropping is essentially a partnership in which one partner provides the capital, the other provides the labor, and the profits (if any) are to be equally divided. Theoretically the cropper also shares the losses, but actually if he goes into debt he evades it simply by moving to another plantation at the end of the season. The planter does not sue him often because he cannot find him, and in any event a judgment against a penniless man would be worthless. If the cropper remains despite his debts, he may discharge them in whole or in part in succeeding years, they may be forgiven him, or he may, if conditions are unfavorable, go deeper into debt.

The parties to a share-cropping contract are, however, highly unequal. The planter is white, literate, intelligent, possessed of some means, and is a member of a dominant race. The cropper is (usually) black, illiterate, unintelligent, poverty-stricken, and a member of a dominated race. The relationship presents great opportunities and temptations for fraud and exploitation on the part of the planter.

Many farmers are undoubtedly unable to resist the temptations to fleece their croppers. (It is indeed true of the white man everywhere in the world that he has often shamelessly robbed black and brown peoples of lesser strength.) During the depths of the depression, when cotton fell to five cents a pound, some planters laughingly said, 'We must now start working our land instead of our niggers.' A classical tale is sometimes told in the Delta of how a planter settled his accounts with a share-cropper.

The planter counted out $1400 in currency and put it upon his desk. It was the amount owing to Jimpson Johnson, a Negro cropper. He sent a messenger to fetch Jimpson to the store. While waiting for him the planter looked longingly at the little pile of money. 'That's too much for Jimpson,' he said. 'Too much for any nigger. He'd just go hog-wild if he had it.' He put $200 in his pocket. Jimpson had not come. The planter looked at the money again. 'Now you know,' he said, talking to himself, 'that nigger just naturally would n't know how to spend $1200.' He put $200 more in his pocket. Still Jimpson had not arrived. 'Now there's no sense in a nigger running around with $1000. If he does he'll get in trouble sure's you're born,' the planter said to himself, as he took $200 more off the stack of currency.

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Then the cropper arrived. 'Jimpson,' the planter told him, 'you made $800 this year.' 'Yassuh,' Jimpson replied. 'Us is halvers, so you take yo' $400 and gimme mine.' The planter counted out $400 and gave Jimpson the remainder.

It is true, however, that not all farmers are exploiters of croppers any more than all bankers are dishonest, all judges are corrupt, or all legislators are takers of bribes. Delta farmers are merely as honest as are Americans in general, and by common consent of observers the treatment given share-croppers has constantly improved during the past fifteen years. None the less it cannot be denied that the very nature of the share-cropping relationship presents great opportunities for fraud.

On the other hand, the cropper is not always virtuous merely because he is poor. He has his own little ways. He is often not above stealing cotton, corn, pigs, chickens, or anything that is movable. To the plantation Negro, stealing from the white man is merely a method of restoring somewhat the balance of property between himself and the planter, whom he always regards as wealthy even if he is on the verge of bankruptcy. Or, in modern terminology, stealing from the rich by the poor is merely a way of distributing the wealth. Thefts of all kinds are so common on plantations that the risk of loss of property comes to be accepted as a minor hazard of agriculture. And these thefts are directed as frequently by Negroes against other Negroes as against the whites.

Croppers often do not hesitate to leave the plantation without notice if they think that because of a poor crop or low prices they will not make any money. In such cases the farmer loses the money advanced to the cropper and is put to the additional expense of hiring others to cultivate the abandoned crop. Nor will the average cropper do an honest day's work if he is not rigorously and unremittingly supervised. This despite the fact that he shares equally in a crop the size of which depends largely upon his own efforts. That is why plantation bells toll mournfully in the cool darkness before dawn; why the fields are continually overlooked by straw bosses and riding bosses (often Negroes); why the Negro does not acquire habits of work which would fit him to succeed as an independent farmer.

IV

The planter does not give the cropper cash with which to buy his monthly rations and clothing wherever he pleases. He gives him instead a 'doodlum' book, the coupons of which are accepted as money only at the plantation store. Critics of the share-cropping system charge that this is one of the many methods used by farmers to enslave croppers. In general the charge is untrue. If the cropper received cash each month during the growing season, all or most of it would be spent for gasoline, whiskey, women, and gambling. Yet he and his family must be clothed and fed, and the farmer out of self-interest is compelled to furnish food and clothing. The doodlum book forces the cropper to spend his money for necessaries, and keeps down his indebtedness to the planter, thereby eventually adding to his profits and reducing the planter's risks. This system has the complete approval of Negro women, who with their children have often borne the burden of the males' extravagance.

Critics of the system charge that croppers' cabins are unfit for human habitation. This charge is in many cases true. A great many cabins are merely tumble-down shacks that are warrens rather than houses. Some of them leak so badly that Negroes say, 'It rains inside my house and leaks outside.' Nor is it any defense of the indefensible to point out that millions of

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Americans live in dark and stinking tenements in the cities; in disgraceful shacks in industrial towns; and in comfortless, bleak houses on the farms.

It is to be noted that the cropper does not agree to pay a definite number of dollars as rent: say, two hundred dollars for twenty acres. He agrees merely to pay half of an unknown quantity of cotton worth an unknown price in the future. He may grow five bales or ten bales. Cotton may bring twenty-five dollars a bale (as in 1932) or sixty dollars a bale (as in 1935). Seed may sell for seven dollars a ton (as in 1932) or forty dollars a ton (as in 1935). The farmer cannot calculate his income in advance as he could if he received cash rent. His only certainty is outgo: so much for taxes, overhead, depreciation, mules, tools, advances to croppers, and so forth. He takes all the risks, but agrees to divide the profits (if any) with his croppers. If crops are good and prices are high, he will make money. If crops are poor and prices are low, he will not only lose money, but will often lose his plantation, if unfavorable conditions exist for two or more years. So many plantations have been lost to mortgagees in the past few years that banks and insurance companies are now among the largest cotton growers in the country.

What risk does the cropper take? As a partner of the farm, he must inevitably share with the farmer the hazards of agriculture and the vagaries of the market. When cotton drops to disastrously low prices, neither he nor the farmer can make money. 'I never had nary a cent in 1932,' a cropper told me, 'and I et so much okra I slid out of bed.' If crops are good and prices are high, croppers will and do make money.

Under any circumstances whatsoever, the cropper cannot starve, cannot go naked, cannot be without shelter and medical services. He achieves complete economic security for one year at least, even if at a relatively low standard of living. This standard, however, he can improve by his own efforts in growing vegetables, keeping chickens, and raising hogs. If he does not do it, he has no one but himself to blame. Essentially, therefore, the cropper's risk is that he will make little or no money or may even go into debt. But he will not be discharged without notice, as is common in industry, and he is not tortured by the industrial worker's fear of losing his job.

During the growing season, the cropper and his family work hard. Their hours are, in Negroes' terms, 'from can to can't.' But the average cropper works on his own crop not more than one hundred and twenty days of the year. If he does odd jobs about the plantation, such as ditching, mending fences, or clearing land, he is paid in cash at the prevailing wage just as though he were an outside or transient laborer. Every cropper's income is augmented by work of this kind. The startling fact is that he is the only common laborer in the United States who can earn his livelihood at any standard of living whatsoever by working only one third of the year.

Assuming that the cropper receives honest treatment, what factors militate against his rise to the eventual status of landowner?

(*a*) Low prices and poor crops. These are beyond the control both of himself and of the planter, with, however, this exception: some planters are more competent than others. Croppers on the land of the more competent planters will naturally fare better than those on the land of the less competent. So, too, stockholders of better-managed companies will usually get greater dividends than stockholders of poorly managed companies.

(*b*) The croppers' thriftlessness. It is difficult for anyone who has not lived

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among Delta Negroes to comprehend their incredible lack of thrift. A tremendous crop was made in the Delta last year. The price was relatively high. Millions of dollars were paid to croppers in November and December, in amounts ranging from two hundred dollars to one thousand dollars or more. Before Christmas, nine families out of ten were penniless. The money went as quickly as it could be spent for bright trash, secondhand automobiles, whiskey, gambling, and riding the trains. The fruits of a year's labor and the hopes of acquiring the status of an independent landowner were dissipated almost overnight.

There are, however, Negroes who are industrious, who do save, and who become landowners. Thousands of acres of Delta land are owned by this minority and they are among the best citizens of the counties in which they live. They have sound houses, barns, mules, tools, chickens, cows, fruit trees, hogs, and all the things that go to make a good life on a farm. But they are a tiny minority among the mass of their thriftless, pleasure-loving, careless-of-the-morrow fellows.

V

Share-cropping is far from being a perfect system either for the farmer or for the cropper. The high risks involved tend to make the farmer a gambler, and the enormous temptations for fraud that it presents break down the fibre of the spiritually weaker. Those farmers — and there are many of them — who are governed by *noblesse oblige* extend paternalism beyond sound business judgment and in so doing often go bankrupt. This paternalism, in turn, affects the cropper harmfully by sapping his strength and making him dependent upon the planter. Indeed, the very economic security that the system affords works against the Negro. It encourages him in his habits of thriftlessness, fortifies him in his well-founded belief that the white man will take care of him, and consequently deprives the weak majority of the will to rise to independent ownership.

It cannot be doubted that the national welfare would be promoted if thousands of croppers owned small tracts of land and lived in the tradition of the good life. In a recent letter to Senator Bankhead of Alabama, President Roosevelt wrote: —

> Thoughtful people everywhere have been gravely concerned with the steady increase in farm tenancy from 1880 to 1935. . . . It has been an ideal of the American people that every American should have an ownership interest in land or in some other means of production. . . . An enduring agricultural civilization must be built on the firm foundation of home and farm ownership. Any long-time improvement of the welfare of the nation and of farm people involves improvement of the tenancy situation.

No one can deny the validity of the ideal which the President has stated. The difficulties of realizing it are, however, enormous. Thousands of croppers, both black and white, are at present unfitted for the responsibilities and cares of independent ownership. Acquiring land is much less difficult than holding it after it has been acquired. Successful small-farm ownership implies first of all a deep love of the land itself, such as marks the peasantry of France or Scandinavia. Our people, save in rare instances, have no such love of the land. Successful ownership, too, implies steady and continuous industry instead of short periods of intensive work and months of loafing. It implies thrift and thought of the morrow. It implies a sound family life and the will to remain in one place. These qualities are possessed by but few of the thousands of the landless tenants and share-croppers of the South. To say that they lack these qualities because they have never owned land is not to

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deny the fact that they must undergo a long period of physical and moral rehabilitation before they are fitted for the responsibilities of landownership. This fact is realized by the government. The Rural Resettlement Administration operates a large plantation in Arkansas known as the Dyess Colony, where nearly five hundred former share-cropper families live. The land has not been turned over to them. They are rigidly supervised by government agents. The colonists are merely being prepared for eventual ownership. No one knows how many years this will take. Nor does anyone know whether the colonists will be successful when the land becomes their own. Ownership of land is not in itself a guarantee of success any more than ownership of a business or a factory.

Share-cropping has continued for seventy years because no one has found a better system to take its place. No sudden change could safely take place within a capitalist democracy. Providing landownership for millions of landless and unprepared people is a vast and enormously complex problem. It is affected by many considerations. It is complicated by factors of race, ignorance, health, governmental regulation of agriculture, the progress of technology, the competition of foreign-grown cotton, and the intranational competition of crops.

It must be remembered that the Negro was ruthlessly delivered in 1862 into a freedom for which he was not prepared. And once the government had achieved the ideal of his freedom he was abandoned and forgotten. It must also be remembered that the growth of large plantations and of farm tenancy is not an isolated phenomenon. In industry the control of the instruments of production and of distribution has tended ever since the close of the Civil War to be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. Chain stores, great aggregations of factories owned and controlled from a single source, monopolies, trusts and holding companies, are making of the United States a nation of workmen and clerks. What has become of the local shoemaker? The tailor? The baker? The dressmaker? The cabinetmaker? The grocer? The druggist? If they survive at all it is because the great corporations making and distributing shoes, clothes, bread, dresses, furniture, groceries, and drugs have not yet found an economic way to penetrate to the fastnesses in which they precariously linger.

It is salutary that throughout the nation thoughtful men are pondering the possibilities and the necessity of improving the lot of millions of poverty-stricken and landless farm people. It will not be enough for the government merely to buy land for them and regard the problem as solved. Not only must they have land, but they must have unremitting supervision for many years. They must be taught sound methods of farming small tracts. They must be physically and morally rehabilitated. They must be cured of malaria and sexual diseases. They must learn thrift and industry. They must, in short, be recast and re-created. This is a problem for the years.

But, until the intelligence of America provides a better system, Negroes will continue to follow mules down the endless turnrows of the Delta; they will hoe the grass and pick the cotton, live on gingersnaps and pump water when times are bad and squander their money when times are good. As spring comes around, it will find them cropping again, catching their mules at dawn, bringing them to the lot at dusk, making love, drinking whiskey, shooting dice, fishing in the creeks, and praising, with matchless imagery and beauty, sweet Jesus, around whose throne they will one day be seated in peace and contentment and joy forever and forever.

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EAST WIND

BY HENRY WILLIAMSON

I

THE east wind was blowing dry sand from the sand hills over the wet shore, toward the dirty brown wavelets almost a mile away to the west. I came down from the fields, past the great white hotel, awaiting its hundred and fifty Easter guests, and by the steep path to the beach. A small boy was with me, holding my hand. An old cap of mine was on his head, the peak pulled over an ear. Under the cap his hair stuck out like part of an old haystack that cattle have eaten.

When last I walked along this shallow coast, the boy had not been born; and now he was seven years of age, and wanting to do all the things that his father had done. It seemed strange that he should be beside me, because this tract of sand hills, this Arabian desert in miniature made beautiful by the Atlantic, had always been to me a place of the solitary spirit, of aloneness. There is a distinction between loneliness and aloneness. A man might be lonely in the vast white hotel on the cliffs; indeed, walking through it just now, I seemed to be voyaging the Atlantic in the *Berengaria* two years ago — one of the most desolate experiences of life so far. It was the large windows, with their views of only the sea and the sky, and the huge empty drawing-room which gave a momentary illusion of being on a liner in mid-ocean. Almost I expected the floors to become harder to my footsteps, and the line of the sea to sink with that inevitable slow rising and falling which fills the nauseated landsman, desperately trying to acquire sea legs, with a desire to hide away and die.

This does not imply a dislike of hotels, and inns, and taverns; there's a warm human spirit beginning to appear in most of them to-day, as there used to be before the invention of the railway. Nearly everyone went by train; the inns, old coaching houses, declined. Now that the roads take so many people on wheels again, the hostels — to use a good old English word — have become alive once more. This particular hostel — or hotel, as it calls itself — was somewhat terrifying by its white vastness and its newness; and besides, we had had only one half pint of beer and a small bottle of lemonade to justify our leaving a six-year-old open-bodied sports car alongside luxurious-looking automobiles which surely belonged to champion golfers, film stars, leaders of dance bands, and others of the supertaxed. We saw some of them sitting at the great windows of the dining room as we slunk past. They looked so small as they gazed, as though half lost, at the blankness of sea and sky instead of the traffic of streets and buildings and the noises of towns they had left. We had some bread and cheese and fruit in a rucksack, and did not envy them behind all that glass, with their central heating and polished

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floors. We were going with the wind and the sand; we were adventurers, about to journey across the Arabian Desert, not knowing how far we should travel, or in what plight return.

The little seven-year-old by my side, with elflike face and haystack hair, was excited when the yellow skeins of sand began to drive against our shoes. 'Supposin' we get buried by a huge enormous storm, what will we do until they find our bones?' he asked, his eyes alight with the memory of some story in the children's section of the newspaper he pounced upon and read so eagerly every Saturday morning.

'Well, if this wind keeps up, the sand hills will cover us completely; they may never find even our bones.'

'Then you and me will be proper skeletons, won't us?' Adding to himself in a musing undertone, 'I'd bestways eat my apples and chocolate biscuits first.' And then to me, 'But the sand hills won't really move, will they?'

'They are moving all the time,' I told him. 'Look over there at that dune. The sand is simply pouring away from it.'

'It's like a waterfall, is n't it? Oh, some sand got in my mouth. It's a good thing we did n't bring Robert after all, is n't it, because he would not only get sand in his mouth, but in his ears and eyes, would n't he?'

Robert is his three-year-old brother, who had climbed into the car that morning and gripped the wheel, roaring with rage at not being allowed to come. Robert is a very determined young person. He has long yellow curls over his shoulders, and blue eyes set close together, and will probably be a champion boxer or all-in wrestler; he punched and slapped us soundly and screamed at us as we detached him from the car. And the last I saw of him as I went round the corner in the car was a little child lying huddled up in the lane outside the garage, sobbing with his face in his arms, and shaking his curls as the gentle voice of his mother invited him indoors to have an apple — or rather six apples, for Robert is never content with one of anything, and instantly demands six. 'Would you like a chocolate bicky?' I said to him, finding him already at the wheel of the car, and trying to start the engine. 'No — six,' he promptly replied, and when I gave him one he threw it on the ground. 'I'll have six,' he decided, as the farmer's dog crunched up the biscuit. So he had six — which means one in each hand.

II

Yes, it was a good thing the three-year-old was not with us, for, as we walked on, the sand began to stream faster over the shore from the ragged sand hills. The white warren on the cliffs behind us, whenever we looked over our shoulder, was always a little bit smaller. We were alone on the shore of the world.

It was a rasping east wind, and it was returning the sand, which a thousand centuries of waves had ground from rock and pebble and shale, to the ocean again. Originally this coast was part of the old river bed. When the river moved away to the south, trees sprang up from acorns and other seeds brought down by winter floods on shoal and mud bank. It is said that a forest stood here in ancient times, where moose and red deer roamed, preyed upon by wild dogs, and wolves, and dreadful sabre-toothed tigers. Less than three miles away, just across the river estuary to which we were walking, the carbonized roots of some of these trees can still be seen at low tide, embedded in sand, and men digging there have found the bones of these animals.

The east wind was a destructive wind; it was trying to tear down the sand hills which the west wind, from the sea, had piled up. The southwest is

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a genial, boisterous wind, which adds to the sand hills until they are smoothed by the pouring force and the weight of its swift sea airs. The hillocks and slopes are bound by marram grass, with creeping roots and long rounded hollow stems which sway and shake and ripple in the wind, and draw aimless arcs and circles with their sharp points drooping on the sand. All winds are the enemies of the marram grass. When the south-west gale drives the long rollers in from the west, then the roots of the marram grasses are exposed, to hang ragged down a sandy face or cliff which the day before was a long smooth slope where the naked feet of pilgrims had sunk to the ankle at every step in hot sand. For usually it is in summer that these sand hills are visited, when all sense of time and place is lost, and a man becomes a spirit of sea and air and sky, feeling the everlastingness of life while larks sing shrilly overhead and the bones and skulls of rabbits lying in the desert are of the incandescent whiteness of eternity.

We walked on, and came to the stump of a tree lying in the sand and playing to itself a strange tinkling music, which was puzzling until we went round the other side of it and found hundreds of barnacles clinging there, their dried and shrunken pipes and fragile gray shells faintly clashing in the wind. While the boy listened to this elfin music there came another sound in the wind, like a flung stone whimpering across the ice of a frozen lake; and we saw a small gray and white bird with sharp wings flying round us in a wide circle. It was a ringed plover. As we walked on we saw its mate running before us among the stones and loose sand above the tide line, then standing in grave silence to watch us, before running on again to draw us away from her eggs laid somewhere in a slight hollow amid the stones. The boy wanted to find them, so that he could write in his diary that he had found the third nest of his life; but the eggs were the color of the sand and the stones, and we might look all day and all the next day and never find them.

The timbers of a wooden ship were embedded in the sands before us, and, seeing them, the boy forgot about the ringed plover and went forward to see his first wreck, which he studied gravely, before suggesting that we should come back here in the summer with spades and buckets and dig for the gold which, he declared, might be buried beneath it. For, he said, it might have been a pirate ship, might n't it? Anyhow, he thought, he would like to bathe by it in the summer and so we must come back even if it was n't a pirate ship after all. And we must bring Robert to see it, must n't we, and also all the other children.

III

The hotel was now a small elongated white honeycomb. Perhaps most of the diners had moved into the other room, and were watching the sea and sky through other windows, and wondering, a little wistfully, if they too ought not to go down to the sands by the sea and defy the wind. The thought reminded us that we had not yet eaten.

So we moved toward the shelter of the sand hills, to find a place out of the wind. We stopped to watch how it had strewn dry sand behind the stones and sticks lying on the shore, gradually filling up the idle or windless spaces before and behind the obstacles, thus giving each the effect of a streamline. We found a sandy cliff where the sun was warm and the wind did not eddy, and scratched ourselves holes to sit in; and then, opening our rucksack, we drank milk and ate our food. We were still some way from the estuary, where we hoped to see salmon boats, but the boy said he was not tired, so after our meal we walked on again. While walking toward the sea to find a

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firm foothold, we saw a beetle hurrying down wind as fast as it could go, to find shelter.

'But,' cried the boy, staring at it, 'if it goes on this way it will get to the sea and then it will have to turn round and run all the way back against the wind. 'T is one mile there, and one mile back; that will be two miles.' He gave this information and stared at me with round eyes.

'Let's turn it back,' I suggested. But at the touch of a finger up went its tail, and the wind caught that little black sail and skidded it a couple of yards before it found its feet again, to hurry on to escape its enemy, the wind.

'Well, perhaps the sea trout will find it and eat it, and that's something,' said the boy. So we walked on, the beetle forgotten, and came to another wooden wreck, half sunk away in sand. We passed a little red tower standing at the edge of the sand hills, called by sailors the Blinker, because at night the oil lamp in its lantern winks toward the dangerous sand bars at the mouth of the estuary, to give pilots a bearing.

It was obvious that the Blinker had been needed on that coast, for after another half mile we came across a third wreck bedded in the sand, with seaweed hanging on its timbers from which the iron nails had long since rusted.

The sand was now uneven, and giving way to patches of shingle, telling that the tides ran strongly here. Soon we saw the northern shore of the estuary in front of us, and two small boats with men waiting at the edge of the sea. We hurried forward, because these were salmon boats and the tide had turned and they would not be able to fish much longer. Each boat had a crew of four, and while one man held the rope on shore, the boat was rowed in a semicircle by two men, while the fourth man threw the net over the stern. The boat returned to the shore when the two hundred yards of net had been dropped, and then began the slow haul-in against the tide. The wind was very cold now that we had stopped walking, and we helped to haul. And then, as the tide-distorted arc of the net grew smaller, we stood apart and watched.

IV

There was a swirl as the seine or purse came near the shore, and at once the four men seemed to change their natures, and indeed their nationality, becoming almost Spanish in the quick and eager way they spoke. It was said that many of the fishermen of the village across the water had Spanish blood in them, from ancestors who had been wrecked on this coast after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The skipper told them to take it easy so that the heel rope, weighted with lead, should come in slowly along the bottom and give no chance for the fish to escape. The purse of the net was lifted up on to the shore, and in it two salmon slapping about. One man put his boot under a fish and kicked it away from the edge of the sea, where it slapped the sand, and, heaving itself upright on its pectoral fins, tried to writhe away down to the water. Meanwhile one of the crew of the other boat fifty yards away — the net of which was being hastily repiled — had thrown a wooden billet through the air, and with this the fish were thumped on the base of the skull and killed.

Salmon usually come into fresh water in schools, each school following a leader; and so as soon as the net of the other boat had been shaken out and repiled they shot another draft. One of the men gave a shout, having seen a fish leap near the shore. The sweeps were bent as the boat cleft the water. When the net was hauled in, there was one fish in it, about eighteen pounds in weight. It was a female fish, like the other two. Female salmon usually come into the rivers together in

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spring; they are more slender and graceful in shape than the males, with smaller heads, and their underjaws have not the kyp or hook which males have. When taken in the net they seemed to struggle with only part of their power, as though they were still dreamy with the depths of ocean — pale green travelers from the rocky glooms of undersea twilight, having come hundreds, perhaps thousands, of miles across the Atlantic. The boy whispered to me that perhaps the fishermen would give us a salmon if we told them they might be the little smolts, no longer than a man's hand, which we had fed two years before in the river at home, before they had gone down to the sea; for there is a pool above the bridge in the deer park where every year hundreds of trout and samlets await the daily showers of artificial food.

'But the fishermen must sell them to buy food and clothes for their children,' I told him. 'Now for that big fish there, eighteen pounds weight, they will get thirty-six shillings.'

'Thirty-six shillings!' he repeated. 'Why, that's an awful lot of money, is n't it? They must be rich, must n't they?'

It was explained that perhaps it was the first fish the boat had taken that week, and also that there was a license of five pounds to be paid every season, which lasted only from April to the end of August. Most of the fishermen have a hard time to live.

'Well,' the little boy whispered in my ear, 'I have got some pennies at home, and perhaps we could find out if they don't catch any more fish and we could give them my pennies, could n't we?'

The wind was blowing colder, the sun was behind clouds, the fishermen went home on the tide, and we went all the way back along the sands, the boy's feet getting heavier and heavier, apples and biscuits and figs eaten, and all the milk drunken, until the only thing to do was to get on Father's back and dream of coming here again in the summer, when the wind was gone and the sand was shining, and dig for that treasure underneath the wreck with all the other children. Return we shall, to find our treasure in the silver of the waves and the golden glance of the sun.

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SPRING AND MR. BARNUM

BY GAIL HAWES

SPRING was an exciting season in Illinois in the years around 1886. Theoretically it began in March, but that month was a discouraging one. We would have a few warm days and Father would hopefully start taking down the storm windows. He would generally get as far as the spare room when the snowflakes began to fall. Lazily at first, then in a thick swirl, and in a few hours we would be deep in a blizzard.

Once more the streets were buried in snow and the horse plough carved its clean deep path, just as if winter were beginning, not ending. Across the street the Beatty yard was an unbroken white expanse, and the two Indian mounds down by the river, which had begun to look like ordinary little brown hills a few days before, were again aloof and mysterious.

By April Fool's Day, though, we were definitely tasting spring. That first day of April was a difficult twenty-four hours for me. The line between a lie and an 'April Fool' was never quite clear in my mind. For three hundred and sixty-four days we children were kept strictly in the paths of truth. Suddenly on the three hundred and sixty-fifth day the whole thing was thrown overboard. It was very confusing.

The windflowers came in April. On the first warm cloudy day, Father would decide to go fishing. We children would draw lots to see who would go with him.

There was a bluff on the river road between Rockford and Oregon that was so beautiful with swaying windflowers that it made your throat ache to look at it. While Father fished, I would climb laboriously up to the top of the bluff and gather a basketful. Their delicate pale colors were folded in a furry silver sheath, as soft to touch as a baby kitten. When I had room for no more, I would sit down, trying not to crush any of the lovely things, and look below me at the thread of road and the brown river beyond. The air was soft and the gray sky seemed almost to touch me, I sat so high on my flowery throne.

When it began to rain, Father called me and we ate our lunch in the shabby covered buggy. Then I curled up on the old leather seat and took a nap while Father fished on and on. It was a perfect day.

The first of May brought some hot days — a foretaste of the prairie heat in store for us. It was then that Mother would rather grudgingly give the word for us to take off our winter flannels: long-sleeved shirts and long-legged drawers — not pliable, like the wool we wear nowadays, but thick and scratchy with many washings. I was bitter about that underwear — not only because I had to wear it all winter, but because I was the last girl in my class to take it off.

'Got yours off?' was the constant query at recess when the weather

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warmed up. I don't know why we thought it necessary to ask. The drawers bulged above our boots and the first button of the shirt was always in sight.

The high spot of the spring — yes, even remembering May Day with its feverish hanging of May baskets — was the arrival of Mr. Barnum's Circus.

I must have been about eight when I suddenly realized that our family never went to the circus. The parade went right by our house, for the tents were put up in the vacant lots above the cemetery on Main Street, and I had felt rather smug in past years, looking down on the crowds lining the curb, from the vantage point of our porch. If, after a last screech from the calliope, we *ran* down Church Street, we could see the parade all over again when it turned from Main Street into State.

I suppose until I was eight I had thought that the parade was all there was. Certainly it was exciting enough to satisfy anyone. Ravishing ladies on horseback, flashing with jewels, handsome men in plumed hats, white satin coats and shorts, all looking to my uncritical eyes born to the purple, so easily they rode and so haughty were they.

The day the posters were put up that spring I was eight, the school fairly seethed with excitement. There was to be a holiday on Circus Day. My sister Mary and I raced home, our school bags banging against our fat legs, to tell Mother about it. We found the family at the dinner table.

'There is n't going to be any school Circus Day,' I said happily, settling myself next to Mother.

There was a painful silence, and I looked up from my stew (with dumplings) wondering what I had said that was wrong.

'That's nice,' said Mother. 'We might go on a picnic.'

'Picnic! Why, Mother, it's Circus Day! We go to the circus.'

'Not us,' muttered Alice, who was older than I.

'Why not?' I wanted to cry.

'Because we're minister's children,' she said loudly.

Just then the door burst open and Uncle Will blew in like a strong north wind.

'Well, Frank,' he roared, 'are you or are you not going to let these poor children of yours go to the circus this year?'

'I'm afraid not, Will.' Father looked very unhappy. His liberal soul must have rebelled again and again at the restrictions imposed on him by a few narrow-minded parishioners.

'The same old pussycats, I suppose,' thundered Uncle Will, pacing the room like one of Mr. Barnum's own lions.

What was the use of dragging in pussycats, I thought. We were talking about circuses. But Father took Uncle Will over to the study, his refuge from the cocked ears of a large family.

Alice explained to me, after Mother had gone to the nursery, that minister's children were not allowed to go to the circus. It was supposed to be immoral. The ladies on the trapeze wore tights, for one thing. I reminded her that it was next to impossible even to hang from the apple tree properly in skirts, and anyhow we saw the posters of the ladies, which was exactly the same.

'They can't stop us from looking at posters,' Alice said defiantly.

It might have ended there, for we were not allowed to tease for things, if in the mail the next day there had n't come a very nice letter from Mr. Barnum to Father, with a family pass.

'Would it take us all in without paying anything?'

'Yes,' said Father.

'Well, why don't you stay home, Father? Because you are the minister.

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And then, you see, Mother would n't even have to take any money.' It sounded jumbled, but it was clear in my mind and quite logical. I loved Father dearly, but after all he was the one who had chosen to be a minister. As for the money side, naturally he would hesitate about taking five children to the circus. But a Family Pass!

Father shook his head. 'No, my dear, I'm afraid not.'

While Mary and I were playing paper dolls on the sitting-room floor a few days later, the door bell rang. We looked at each other in dismay. If it was a caller for Mother we should have to pick up all the paper dolls and go to the nursery. We heard a man's voice ask Nora for Father, and when she asked his name he said, 'Mr. Barnum.'

Nora threw a shawl over her head and ran over to Father's little stone study. We could see her from the long French window in the sitting room. We crept softly to the portières and peeked into the parlor. Yes, there the great man sat: Mr. Barnum — with his circus, no doubt, down at the depot waiting to be unpacked. We thought he looked nice. He had a bald head with a fringe of hair and his eyes twinkled — much jollier-looking than some of Father's deacons.

Pretty soon Father came across the grass and in by the front door. We sat, as quiet as mice, and listened to the two men. Father seemed to enjoy Mr. Barnum, for they talked for a long time. As to the circus being immoral, we distinctly heard him say 'a moral spectacle' and 'as educational as a trip to Europe.' Father thanked him for the pass. We listened anxiously to hear if he said he would use it, but he did n't. Father almost never changed his mind about decisions.

The day before the circus I took the pass to school and told about Mr. Barnum's call. It had seemed, when I had first thought of it and asked Father, a kind of compensation for not going to the circus. But it was a hollow sort of pleasure, and I returned the pass to Father soberly.

In the night there was a heavy tramping of feet on the road, which woke me up. I crept to the window and knelt there, shivering a little in my flannel nightgown as the cool spring breeze flowed over me. The elephants were thudding up the street, their great trunks swaying. Once there was a long piercing howl from one of the strange beasts shut away from my sight in its cage. I stayed until the last gilt coach, with its great heavy wheels, and the last weary horseman, drooping over his saddle peak, had gone by me up the street. There was a feeling of strangeness in the air, a smell of dust and animals mingled with the clean odor of the lilacs under my window.

Finally, trembling with cold and excitement, I crept back to bed to the sweet warmth of a sleeping and philosophical Mary. But my heart was heavy within me. Mr. Barnum's circus had come to town.

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THE TWO MILORDS
OR
THE BLOW OF THUNDER

An Internationally Air-Conditioned Play, for the Coronation-Exposition Theatres of 1937

BY STEPHEN LEACOCK

[NOTE: *In view of the fact that a great number of visitors to the Coronation will also go over to the French Exposition, the Theatrical Press of Paris is announcing that a new type of play will be put on, designed especially for these English-speaking visitors. The plays will be typical French plays although performed in English, and will seek to preserve as far as possible the idiom and tone of French, and (as the announcements themselves have it) 'to reproduce the French middle as it is.' We are glad to be able to append the text of one of the first of the plays to be presented.*]

Piece in One Scene

Personnages of the Piece, in the Order of Their Apparition

MILORD SIR ROSS: Ancient Remnant of old High Scotch, sufficiently aged. He will never see again the quarantine, in effect, one would say well the sixantine. But he guards always the high and erect tail of the Scottish race. Sir Ross has adventured himself on the high Finance of the French Purse at Paris.

JEAN: Chamber valet, type known.

MILORD THE BARON ALPHONSE DE CITROUILLE: French financier, associated of Sir Ross. He is young and high, with the maintenance rather of a man of affairs than of a stump of the old French aristocracy.

MILADI MADAME LA COMTESSE FIFINE ROSS: The French wife of Sir Ross. She is young, very spiritual and very jolly, and very degaged in her allure.

The scene passes itself at Paris, in the apartment of SIR ROSS, *apartment sufficiently chic, one would say even coquette. One divines in its decoration the hand of a Frenchwoman.*

At the lift of the curtain, SIR ROSS *discovers himself elongated on a long chair. He is carrying a smoking, with a black pants. He has a journal in his hand, his eyes plonged in the list of the actions of the Purse of the Morning.*

He sounds. JEAN *appears.* 'Mister sounded?' 'Yes, make me mount the journal of this evening.' 'Mister, it is not yet arrived.' 'Very well; the moment it arrives make it mount the whole suite.' 'Perfect, mister.'

JEAN *makes a false start and then reenters to announce:* 'Milord the Baron de Citrouille!'

The BARON DE CITROUILLE *advances himself in the chamber;* SIR ROSS, *to receive him, dresses himself on his sitting-part.*

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The BARON, *in giving him a cordial shake-hands:* 'No, no, do not put yourself on end. I pray you, rest there.'

The BARON *goes to place himself on end near the chimney. He is not in tenure of evening, but wears a complete of bureau, to know, a jacket, an open chemise, with a gray pants.*

Both milords carry an air of anxiety, above all SIR ROSS.

SIR ROSS (*taking the word first*): 'You come from the city?'

SIR, THE BARON: 'From the Purse itself.'

SIR ROSS: 'And our affairs, our actions?'

THE BARON: 'One cannot more bad — all our actions sink!'

SIR ROSS (*with an effort*): 'An instant! I forget my duties: you must be fatigued. You will drink something. Let me make you mount a bottle of whiskey-scotch.' (*He sounds.*)

THE BARON: 'My faith, you are very aimable. But let it be a half bottle: I am very little drinker.'

SIR ROSS (*to* JEAN, *who appears*): 'Make seek a half bottle of whiskey-scotch, and mount it here.'

JEAN: 'Yes, mister.'

SIR ROSS: 'Mount it yourself and with it mount the evening journal.'

JEAN (*hoisting his shoulders*): 'Still always not here, mister.' (*He sorts.*)

SIR ROSS (*essaying a calm*): 'And if the actions always fall?'

THE BARON (*passing to a gridiron and taking on it a cigarette, which he lights. He speaks of a tone measured, calculated*): 'If there is nothing more to do, we are at dry of money.'

SIR ROSS: 'Then it is the ruin!'

THE BARON (*coldly*): 'For you!'

SIR ROSS (*lifting himself from his sitting-part and erecting himself to the height of his high tail*): 'For me! How for you? For you, too, Citrouille!'

The BARON *is about to take the word when* JEAN *reënters, carrying a plateau with a glass and a half bottle of whiskey-scotch. He reverses it and places it before the* BARON.

SIR ROSS: 'The journal, the journal of this evening?'

JEAN (*a little impatiented*): 'Mister, still not here. But Madame la Comtesse has reëntered from her walk in her automobile, and is mounted at her boudoir.'

SIR ROSS: 'Pray her to descend: that she does not wait: make her know that it is important.'

JEAN: 'Yes, mister.' (*He inclines himself and sorts.*)

SIR ROSS (*remitting himself on his sitting-part and resuming the entertainment*): 'But you! Ruin for you also, Mister the Baron. For both of us — as associates — is it not?'

THE BARON (*raising the glass and coldly drinking the half bottle of whiskey-scotch*): 'For you alone!'

SIR ROSS: 'But you?'

THE BARON: 'I did not sign!'

SIR ROSS: 'But your honor! Mister the Baron, your honor as a Citrouille!'

THE BARON (*hoisting*): 'I mock myself not badly of it! In the affairs, there is not of it! Listen, Sir Ross — '

He goes to plant himself direct in face of SIR ROSS, *who holds himself seated always on his sitting-part.* 'Listen.'

At that moment JEAN *announces:* 'Madame la Comtesse!'

FIFINE *precipitates herself into the room — then arrests herself — in apparence surprised, confused, almost ball-turned, to find both the two men there.*

The BARON DE CITROUILLE *remains on end; he gives no sign; he does not look at* FIFINE, *nor* FIFINE *at him.*

SIR ROSS *speaks:* 'Ah, you have come at once. It is very aimable on your part. I have to talk — but first let me present Mister the Baron of Citrouille. You know him well of name, is it not? La Comtesse Fifine Ross, my wife.'

The two incline themselves.

MADAME LA COMTESSE (*finding her*

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voice): 'How do you carry yourself, Mister de Citrouille?'

DE CITROUILLE: 'How go you, madame?'

One sees that they seem to avoid themselves of their eyes. One divines something of intrigue, of hidden. But SIR ROSS *does not see nothing. He lifts himself suddenly from his sitting-part and cries himself:* 'Rest, rest with my wife. I myself will descend: this soundrel of a John is hiding something.' (*He elongates himself in a hurry.*)

FIFINE (*pushing with a profound breath of relief*): 'Ah, I expected to find you alone — only you — ' (*She precipitates herself toward him.*) 'Ah, Alphonse! My cherished!'

They rush toward one another. The BARON *passes his arm to her around the figure and poses his lips on to hers. They murmur words of love:* 'Ah, my cherished! My cabbage! My cauliflower! My toad!'

FIFINE (*at last enforcing herself to quit his extraint*): 'That marches?'

THE BARON: 'That marches! That marches marvelously! I have not told him yet. I was just going to. Everything has succeeded for us to a marvel. It was all over to-day. And what he does not know, not suspect even, for him not dishonor alone — it is the prison. Ah!' (*He lights a cigarette with cold blood.*) 'He will not trouble us no more!'

FIFINE: 'Explain to me, a little, my cabbage. I have not even yet clearly understood. We other women, it is not for us, the Purse. How did you combine it, my petty toad?' (*She passes to him the fingers in the hairs.*) 'Tell me how.'

THE BARON: 'Of the simplest fashion! As our actions lowered I made him sign hypothèques of margin, you comprehend, to sustain them — hypothèques which he had not the right to allocate, let it be then even for amortization — '

FIFINE (*closing to him the mouth with her jolly palm*): 'Oh, la, la, la! leave all that. I do not comprehend a word. But I know what it means to us. Oh my God! What happiness!' (*She throws herself in his arms.*)

One hears voices below — a tumult — a blow of revolver.

JEAN (*entering, all exsuffled*): 'Madame! Monsieur!'

BOTH: 'What is it what it is?'

JEAN: 'Madame! Monsieur! It is the Police!'

THE BARON: 'The Police!'

JEAN: 'Yes, the Police! She is here! She came to take Milord Sir Ross.'

THE BARON (*with a calm*): 'And then what?'

JEAN: 'Sir Ross asked for a moment — to seek papers — and then, there below — in the dining room — he made his brain jump!'

DE CITROUILLE: 'He made his brain jump! He burnt his brain!'

JEAN: 'With a blow of revolver.'

DE CITROUILLE: 'He is dead?'

JEAN: 'Oui, monsieur, he is dead.' (JEAN *melts into tears and sorts.*)

LADY FIFINE: 'Ah, mon chou! Viens, donc! Viens, mon crapaud!'

CURTAIN

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MUST WE HAVE ANOTHER BOOM?

BY SUMNER H. SLICHTER

I

IT may seem paradoxical to discuss the danger of a boom when seven or eight million people are out of work, yet the press is filled with warnings. The president of the New York Stock Exchange in a year-end statement advised against 'a too sudden or too full use of the nation's swollen bank deposits,' several days later the chairman of the Chase National Bank and the president of the National City Bank sounded notes of caution, and Chairman Eccles of the Federal Reserve Board, speaking in New England, expressed concern over inflationary possibilities in the large and growing volume of bank deposits. Most significant of all, the monetary policy of the country, expansionist since 1933, has been changed to one of mild control. A preliminary step occurred last summer when Reserve requirements were raised 50 per cent; a second occurred late in December when the Treasury announced a scheme for partially 'sterilizing' gold imports by buying bullion with money borrowed from the banks; a third was the recent increase in the reserve requirements of the banks to the full permissible limit by the Federal Reserve Board. Concern over the possibility of a runaway boom is not confined to the United States. The London *Economist* has recently conducted a symposium of leading British economists on the subject of controlling the boom, and Mr. Keynes discussed the topic at length in the London *Times*. Sweden is planning her 1937–1938 budget for the purpose of producing a restrictive effect.

As a matter of fact, booms and a large volume of unemployment are not incompatible. A boom is simply the kind of business expansion which generates its own collapse, and there is no reason why this kind of expansion cannot occur while millions are out of work. Indeed, this happened on a small scale during the late spring and summer of 1933, when about twelve million men were unemployed. The expectation of sharply higher prices produced a rush among business enterprises to build up inventories. There was a sudden and substantial rise in production and employment, followed by a drop after inventories had been substantially increased. There are other kinds of booms and other ways in which booms bring about their own collapse, but this simple example shows that a boom and a considerable amount of unemployment may exist together.

II

Why is there concern over the present situation? Certainly no one could have felt much alarm over a runaway boom during the first two years of revival. Despite the heroic efforts of the government to stimulate recovery by depreciating the currency, by the NRA, by the AAA, and by a huge vol-

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ume of public spending, industrial production during the second quarter of 1935 was only 10 per cent above the second quarter of 1933. The reasons for this slow progress need not concern us here. Suffice it to say that between the middle of 1935 and the middle of 1936 industrial production made twice as much progress as during the preceding two years.

The rapid rise in production which began in the summer of 1935 occasioned no concern as long as it was accompanied by little or no rise in prices. Indeed, throughout 1935 and the first half of 1936, prices were remarkably steady. About the middle of last year, however, they began to rise. True, the general index, which contains many sluggish prices, advanced only 2 per cent between July and December. Concealed by the general averages, however, was a spectacular rise in prices of raw materials. From the end of May to the end of the year, the Dow-Jones index of commodity futures advanced 42 per cent. Other things began to happen also. Money began to circulate faster, and commercial loans, which had been decreasing during most of the revival as enterprises paid their debts, began to increase. And all the time the money on deposit in the banks was being steadily increased by government borrowing and by gold imports. Demand deposits, indeed, are already above the level of 1929. Furthermore, they are being spent at little more than half the normal rate. Even without further increase in demand deposits, there might be a huge jump in the demand for goods simply from a disposition to spend money at a more normal rate.

III

Early in February one might have argued that the problem of preventing a boom is more likely to be a problem of 1938 or 1939 than of 1937. During January there occurred a sizable drop in the future prices of commodities. The war scare had somewhat subsided and there was prospect that the effects of the drought would be offset to some extent by acreage increases which the Department of Agriculture is encouraging for 1937. Doubts arose as to whether the increases in wages and raw-material prices that occurred in the late months of 1936 could be passed on sufficiently in the form of higher prices to preserve profit margins.

Since the middle of February, however, the outlook has changed. The growing world-wide armament race has encouraged speculation in many international commodities, and the victories of Mr. Lewis have started a fresh cycle of wage increases in this country. From the armament boom and the growing aggressiveness of labor, forward buying has received a new impetus, and this in turn raises prices and stimulates new wage demands and more forward buying. Hence there is real danger of our getting caught in a spiral of wage-price increases.

In the face of this spiral of rising wages and prices, the monetary authorities find themselves virtually helpless. Their control over the quantity of money in the country is very great, — greater, in fact, than the man in the street appreciates, — but unfortunately they have no way of curbing commodity speculation without at the same time curtailing investment in industrial plants and equipment. This is none too large now and it is badly needed in order to absorb the unemployed. Hence the country finds its price level pretty much controlled by the plans of foreign governments and of organized labor.

There is a good chance that the present unhealthy forward buying may be brought to a halt within the next few months by a perfectly normal process. For example, the output of many raw materials, particularly crops,

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may be increased sufficiently to halt the rise in prices. Furthermore, the building up of inventories against price advances may come to a halt within a few months simply because managers regard inventories as large enough. If the drive of labor for higher wages continues with little abatement after forward buying falls off, business may be confronted with a difficult situation, because it has been largely forward buying which has made it easy for enterprises to pass on wage increases to consumers. A business recession produced by a drop in forward buying and by an encroachment of costs upon prices is not an attractive prospect. Nevertheless, since forward buying is so obviously dangerous and since it is also beyond the control of monetary authorities, a mild recession would not be entirely unwelcome. The problem is to keep the recession mild by preventing the drop in forward buying from producing a drop in investment in plant and equipment. That is why it is so important to keep long-term interest rates low.

IV

Whether or not a recession before the end of the year postpones the problem of controlling the boom, the problem is almost certain to confront us sooner or later and plans for dealing with it should be made at once. The problem will arise from the fact that for five or six years the country has fallen far short of meeting its needs for most forms of durable goods — housing, public utility equipment, railroad equipment, and industrial equipment in general. The estimates of the deferred demand are necessarily crude, but the totals are impressive. For three years during the depression, residential construction was less than one tenth the current requirements of the country, and the accumulated housing shortage is estimated at approximately 1,800,000 houses. Purchases of locomotives and freight cars by the railroads sank to virtually nothing and are still moderate. The railroads are short approximately 5000 locomotives and 400,000 freight cars. The output of the public utilities is now 15 per cent above 1929 and steadily increasing, but their capital expenditures during the last three years have been low. Purchases of other forms of industrial equipment sank to less than 40 per cent of normal. Estimates of the accumulated demand for industrial equipment (other than railroad and public utility) range from $7,000,000,000 to $10,000,000,000.

Suppose that, about 1938 or 1939, the country attempted on a large scale to meet its accumulated needs for housing, railroad equipment, public utility equipment, and industrial equipment in general. What would happen and what could we do about it? Obviously there would be a substantial increase in production and employment. The unemployment problem, on the whole, would cease to worry us (it might be replaced by the problem of those who prefer not to work). Long before plants as a whole would reach capacity operation, some branches of industry would be unable to meet the demand for goods. These points of shortage, which we may call 'bottlenecks,' would be of decisive importance because they would make deliveries of some types of goods difficult to obtain and cause premium prices to be offered for prompt delivery. The shortages of some goods and the rise in their prices would induce increases in the prices of other goods, and the appearance of sellers' markets would encourage the speculative accumulation of inventories and would make the sellers' markets worse. No one knows precisely how much increase in industrial production would be necessary before bottlenecks in industry became numerous. My guess is that a 20 per cent rise in production, if occur-

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ring within eighteen months, would reveal many bottlenecks.

V

The kind of boom which I have described might be called 'a deferred-demand boom,' because it would derive its impetus largely from expenditures which should have occurred in the period 1931 to 1936. It might also be called a 'bottleneck' boom, because the rise in prices and the speculative buying would be largely induced by bottlenecks. Many people believe that booms can be controlled by monetary policies. Now it is true that the power of the Treasury and the Reserve Banks to control the amount of money in the country and the rate of interest is very great. The Reserve Banks, for example, possess huge holdings of government bonds which they could sell for the purpose of reducing the reserves of the member banks and forcing a drop in demand deposits. The Treasury has over a billion dollars of deposits in banks around the country. By withdrawing these deposits, it could compel a great reduction in bank credit. Even the government's deficit might be used as a deflationary device if the government so desired. All that would be necessary would be for the Treasury to remove from the banks the money which it borrows from them. This would reduce their reserves and force them to reduce their loans. In fact, if monetary policy alone would control booms, there would be nothing to worry about except the willingness of the authorities to act.

Unfortunately, a boom produced by deferred demand and bottlenecks does not lend itself readily to control by monetary policy alone. Suppose that the Reserve Banks, assisted by the Treasury, tried to halt the increase in prices by stopping the growth of demand deposits and raising interest rates. The interest rates which would be high enough to control the rise in prices at the bottlenecks would be too high for the rest of industry. They would halt the increase in production at a time when many branches of industry still had idle capacity and when millions were still unemployed. Such a policy cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Obviously it would be wasteful in the extreme to halt the increase of production throughout industry simply because inadequate productive capacity at some points threatened to start a spiral of price increases. And even if this policy seemed the least of several evils, the country would scarcely tolerate putting on the brakes while thousands of men were desperately seeking work and hoping for jobs to appear.

On the other hand, if prices were permitted to rise at the points of shortage and to affect the rest of the price structure, temporary inflation would be introduced into prices which would be likely to be followed by a drop in prices and a recession in business as the bottlenecks were eliminated. Monetary policy has an important part to play in bottleneck booms by preventing the rise in prices from getting out of hand and producing a spiral of speculation which eventually collapses. It fails to reach the heart of the problem because (1) it does not prevent the development of bottlenecks, and (2) it does not assure that there will be adequate sources of new demands to support markets when the deferred demand for housing and equipment begins to taper off.

VI

If monetary policy is insufficient, what is needed? Let me begin by suggesting three rather obvious and simple devices which would be helpful, although in themselves not sufficient. Most important of all is reduction of the expenditures of the government as

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business spending increases. Certainly the government should not aggravate a bottleneck and deferred-demand boom by spending more than it collects. Mr. Keynes and Mr. Eccles, two of the ablest exponents of government deficits during depressions, are advising that it is high time that government budgets show surpluses. They are right, for obviously the policy of deficit financing during depressions implies that there will be surpluses during prosperity. Sweden, which financed public works and unemployment relief by a deliberately created deficit during the depression, is now, as I have indicated above, setting a notable example by expressly creating a budget surplus for the purpose of controlling the boom. Our own government is having such difficulty in reducing its expenditures that increased taxes may be necessary to avoid a continuation of a deficit next year. Congress naturally will balk at raising taxes just before elections, but it may have to raise them. If it does not, the government deficit may have an inflationary effect in 1938.

A second device that may be of some help is the reform of the accounting practices of business concerns. Business managers, quite naturally, determine the expenditures of their enterprises largely by the outlook for profits, and they judge the outlook for future profits in no small measure by present profits. But the usual methods of accounting overstate profits in good years and understate them in bad. Hence they introduce fluctuations into business by encouraging managers to spend too much part of the time and too little part of the time.

There are two principal ways in which business men are fooled by their present methods of accounting. One arises from the methods of handling depreciation. The only way in which an enterprise can recover the depreciation of its equipment is by selling goods. Consequently, one might suppose that each unit of output would be charged a uniform amount for depreciation. As a matter of fact, a very different procedure is usually followed. A machine which is expected to last ten years is ordinarily charged off in ten equal installments. This means that in good years the depreciation charge per unit of output is too small and in bad years too large. As a result, profits are overstated in good years and understated in bad. If each unit of output were charged a uniform amount for depreciation, the profits of business enterprises in the long run would not be affected, but they would fluctuate less from year to year.

The other way in which present accounting methods mislead business men is found in the handling of inventory gains and losses. Most concerns permit these gains and losses to affect their statement of profits. When prices rise, for example, the profits of the enterprise are swollen by inventory gains. This, of course, is ridiculous, because the inventory gains of this year are merely the basis for an inventory loss some other year. No concern should let inventory gains or losses affect its statement of current profits — inventory gains should be credited to a special reserve and inventory losses charged against the reserve.

There is nothing to prevent business concerns from reforming their methods of keeping books, and a substantial sprinkling of enterprises have already made the changes that I have outlined. Many more will do so in the years to come. The government, however, is in a position to encourage these changes. At present the Treasury does not permit profits to be computed for tax purposes by the methods which I have suggested. Hence an enterprise which reforms its accounting methods must keep two sets of books, an accurate set for its own use and a wrong set for tax-

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computing purposes. By permitting corporations to keep books as I have suggested for tax purposes, the government would accelerate the reform of business accounting. With profits more stable, the temper of the business community would fluctuate less from year to year, and the expenditures of business enterprises, the volume of production, and the volume of employment would all be steadier.

A third device for moderating the boom is the control of installment buying. This is a very touchy subject. Indeed, the people who have much to say about government deficits have little to say about consumer deficits. Nevertheless, one may inflate demand as much as the other. When installment buying is on the increase, consumer demand is greater than consumer incomes; when it is on the decrease, consumer demand is less than consumer incomes. If we were looking for a scheme to make consumer demand (and, therefore, business in general) unstable, we could not do better than to encourage installment buying.

The total volume of consumer indebtedness at the present time is probably not excessive. Furthermore, in spite of the recent increase in installment buying, consumer indebtedness may be decreasing because thousands of persons are reducing their mortgage debts. Installment buying for goods other than securities and real estate, however, is already above the limits of 1929. No one knows exactly how large it is or how many companies are engaged in the business. The number seems to be increasing and the volume of loans by the larger companies is at record-breaking heights. Plainly the present inflation of consumer demand is paving the way for contraction sooner or later when new borrowing is not sufficient to offset the repayment of old loans. This contraction in consumer demand will be doubly disastrous if it occurs just about the time the deferred demand for equipment by business enterprises begins to fall off. The use of credit to finance installment buying needs to be brought under control, and yet it is not clear how this can be done. Most of the concerns in the business are not subject to regulation; no one knows how many of them there are or how much business they are doing. A study of installment buying for the purpose of devising ways of bringing it under control is badly needed.

VII

None of the steps that I have suggested quite adequately meets the problem ahead of us. None assures that bottlenecks will not develop, and, more important, none assures that there will be new sources of demand to offset the eventual drop in deferred demand for housing and industrial equipment.

There is only one way to prevent the development of bottlenecks. That is to see them coming and to expand productive capacity before they develop. To a great extent the discovery of incipient points of shortage is a responsibility of the marketing and purchasing department of business concerns. The better they do their jobs, the fewer and less serious will be the bottlenecks. But should the task be left entirely to individual business enterprises? Trends in demand are notoriously difficult to predict, and the job of forecasting them is likely to require more elaborate statistical research than most private concerns can afford. A Division of Bottleneck Research in the government, which would give constant study to trends in demand and to the interaction of changes in one type of demand upon other types, would reveal many points of inadequate productive capacity which private enterprises might miss until too late to prevent a

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shortage of goods. The Department of Commerce might assume the responsibility of conducting a continuous and systematic search for incipient bottlenecks, or the task might be undertaken by the Research Division of the Federal Reserve Board. By making its studies public, the government agency would cause private enterprises to check its conclusions and stimulate them to adjust their capacity so as to prevent shortages of goods.

VIII

This brings us to the most difficult problem of all — the development of new sources of demand to offset the eventual drop in deferred demand. About this problem there is not a great deal that the government can do. It can defer some public construction during the height of the boom and later expand public works to offset the drop in private spending. But obviously this would not go to the heart of the difficulty. It would limit the cumulative effects of the drop in private spending, but it would not create the basis for an expansion. The government might also encourage (as it is doing) the accumulation of unemployment reserves from which consumer demand might be financed as industrial employment drops, and it might supplement the unemployment benefits with relief expenditures. What has just been said about expenditures for public works applies also to unemployment benefits and relief — they limit the contraction in business without providing a basis for expansion. The government might control the volume of installment buying so that a recession in business would not find consumers heavily burdened with short-term debts. Finally, the government might combat a recession in private investment by a credit policy which made for lower interest rates. But a drop in interest rates is a notoriously feeble device for halting a general drop in business. Something far more powerful would be needed in order to stimulate investment in the face of a contraction in deferred demand.

A redistribution of income would be helpful, provided it increased the demand for consumer goods without raising the cost of capital goods. The increase in consumer demand would create new opportunities for the profitable investment of capital. This would tend to halt the drop in the volume of investment — particularly if the price of capital goods were not increased. The necessary change in the distribution of income would probably be accomplished by raising wages in the consumer-goods industries toward the end of the boom, while leaving wages in the capital-goods and construction industries unchanged. It is difficult, however, to see how such planned changes in prices could be made in a free economy. They imply a central control of prices and a regimentation of industry which are incompatible with our present institutions.

What, then, can we do? The accident of a war starting at the right time might prevent the eventual drop in deferred demand from being followed by a business recession. But war, aside from being a calamity infinitely worse than a depression, would only postpone the evil day and would make the ultimate collapse far worse. An expansion of world trade based upon reductions of trade barriers might offset the drop in deferred demand. This consummation is devoutly to be wished, but it cannot be counted upon.

This brings us to technological progress as a protection against depression. Improvements in present products and methods, and the development of new products and methods, create new opportunities for investment. If the engineers, physicists, chemists, and

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others engaged in industrial research only make enough discoveries during the next five years, they will be able to create sufficient new opportunities for investment to offset the eventual drop in deferred demand.

As a simple illustration, consider the matter of housing. There are about 25,000,000 houses in the United States. The replacement demand for housing is small because the average life of a house is above fifty years. Improvements in design and materials, and reductions in cost sufficient to reduce the average life of a house to thirty or thirty-five years, would create an enormous replacement demand for housing. Suppose that by a series of improvements the cost of a house which is now $4000 was reduced to $2500, and suppose that the $2500 house was substantially superior in design and materials. Such a reduction in cost is not unthinkable. It is far less than the reduction made during the last thirty years in the cost of automobiles. I do not venture to predict precisely how much the replacement demand for housing would be increased by a 37½ per cent cut in the cost of construction, accompanied by improvements in design and materials. The increase would unquestionably be large. Indeed, it does not seem extravagant to predict that the replacement demand might be stepped up to 500,000 or 600,000 houses a year. Granted substantial technological progress, the building industry might be kept busy for twenty or thirty years replacing most of the present houses in America with better-planned, better-constructed, more convenient dwellings. It all depends upon how rapidly the engineers and others improve the product and reduce its cost.

Similar possibilities of creating investment demand exist in the field of railroad equipment, agricultural implements, public utility equipment, and industrial equipment in general. It is essentially a matter of technological progress. Consequently, it is beyond the control of the government, of economists, of money experts, and indeed of everyone except the engineers, physicists, chemists, and other industrial researchers and the business concerns for whom they work. From this statement a conclusion of first importance follows: The responsibility of avoiding a severe recession in business four or five years hence, after deferred demand begins to drop, rests above everything else upon the initiative and enterprise of thousands of business men scattered from one end of the country to the other and upon their willingness to spend money on industrial research. Business, in other words, is being presented with a test of its foresight and its resourcefulness. It must not rely upon government direction and planning to produce stability. The government, to be sure, has a highly important rôle to play. It must help by pursuing a wise budget policy, by controlling speculation and installment buying, by encouraging the reform of accounting practices, by building up unemployment reserves which will aid in preventing any recession in business from becoming cumulative, and by helping to discover incipient bottlenecks. None of these policies, however, will develop new sources of demand to offset the eventual drop in deferred demand which has accumulated during the last five or six years. This is the greatest problem of all, and it is one which only business men and their technical staffs can handle. Whether or not stability is achieved during the next decade will depend more than anything else upon how successfully the business men and their technicians create new opportunities for investment by improving equipment and products and by developing new products.

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THE GOAT

His conscience held his passion on a tether
As a wanton goat is fastened to a stake.
The fragile bond that held the two together
Was always taut — not quite enough to break.

Callow romanticism, in youth,
Disguised desires by which he was molested.
Much later he, confronted with the truth,
Could not forgo the virtue he detested.

And thus, forever tugging, yet restrained,
He chafes, the painful collar round his throat;
Takes pride in the convention he's maintained,
But still remains, at heart, a thwarted goat.

R. S.

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THE POOL

Now I am still again, as a pool in the forest.
Once the soft hands of the wind were gentle and tender,
And the wings of birds brushed me with fleeting caresses,
And blossoms fell, floated and decked me with splendor.

You too, for a short sweet day, preened in my mirror,
Lovelier in me than you were in the gaze of the sun;
But soon you, too, were gone with the refluent season;
The leaves grow brown and the gray afternoons have begun.

Now I am still again, and the forest is songless.
But soon, as the moon grows cold and the swallows depart,
I will harden with frost, at first at the surface emotions
And, as the winter strikes, deep at the springs of the heart.

R. S.

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WINTER IN CARTHAGE

BY ALICE BERRY-HART

I

It was not only the absence of commotion which woke me earlier than usual that morning at the end of September: it was a stillness that waited for something. I let myself out softly on to the terrace so as not to awaken the household. The sun was pouring a flood of gold across the Gulf of Tunis, but though the white houses of Carthage were brilliant in its light there appeared behind them, over the Cathedral hill, a pile of dark blue clouds. Dust whirled up from the fields, which thirsted for rain after five months of drought.

'*C'est la fin de l'été, Madame,*' Maria said, when she came to do the washing. 'The season of rain begins. We must be quick to get the clothes hung out to catch the morning sun. The clouds are coming up in the west.' She went up to the *buanderie* on the housetop with the basket of soiled linen.

'Madame,' she called back from the top stair, 'I have six eggs in my bag. I brought them in case you needed them.'

'Very well,' I said. Rain was certainly at hand. It was the expectation of it that made the difference. There was a cool undercurrent of autumn in the westerly wind. But the rumbling that came to my ears was not thunder yet: the children were merely playing their favorite game of rolling the stone cannon balls that flanked our garden path. The ammunition of ancient wars, dug up from the ruined fortifications, is now used to ornament modern villas in Carthage.

'Madame!' It was my Arab neighbor this time, holding a couple of large white eggs over the fence. They were beauties, and I took them, though she charged a little more than others did. They were still warm, and I decided to give them to the children for lunch. I had scarcely put them into the ice box before I heard the musical cry '*Les œufs frais!*' coming from the corner of the street. A handsome old Arab in a blue smocked coat, with a straw hat perched upon his turban, appeared at the garden gate. This was Mohammed.

'Madame!' he called in a courteous tone, and then in a high, singing voice after jangling the bell, '*Les œufs frais!*' I looked through the vines.

'Not to-day!' I answered.

'But I shall not be around to-morrow. They are only four francs fifty a dozen to-day,' he said, nodding persuasively, and squatting down to unpack the eggs from his basket. He laid them in rows in the dust. The two children left the stone balls and began to climb the gate. I hurried forward to rescue the eggs from the baby, and Mohammed went on with his argument. 'I always give you the market price. Last time it was five francs sixty. Why should it change so?'

'You should know,' I retorted.

'The summer crowds are gone,' he said, handing me the eggs through the

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bars of the gate. Reflecting that I might bake some cakes, I accepted them.

When I returned to pay him Mohammed asked me if I had any need of vegetables. I answered that we bought them from the peddlers who came round.

'Ah, but it is the end of the season,' he said. 'There will not be any *marchands de légumes* after the end of September. My son will come here with his cart. Madame has seen my son? No? *Ah, il est très beau! Très blanc! Madame verra!*' Exacting from me a promise that I would examine his son's merchandise, the old Arab went on his way, his musical cry growing fainter in the distance.

It certainly was the end of the season. The *marchand de glace*, the *facteur*, the *épicier*, and the *boucher* all called unusually early. They explained that there was no one left at the *plage*. The little *boucherie* would close at the end of the week. The ice would stop in a few days, and the train service connecting Carthage with Tunis would change to the half-hourly one of the winter.

On our morning walk we saw that most of the houses were already shuttered and barred for the winter. Only in the grottoes and caves formed by the ruins of the ancient fortifications of Carthage along the sea front still lingered the campers and squatters, the very poorest of summer visitors, who had escaped to the seaside from the terrible heat of Tunis town. With a few cases and old curtains they had contrived furniture and privacy for themselves and their enormous families of children. To-day we saw them moving uneasily about as if they were undecided whether to pack up and depart or to risk a few more days before the rain came.

On the way home we were joined by Jean, Maria's husband, who worked in our garden. 'Madame must buy seeds for the winter vegetables,' he said. 'There is no need to disburse much money on what one can grow for oneself.' He was unusually emphatic, and I supposed he had heard of Mohammed's new venture into provision selling. 'If Madame would advance me a month's salary I might become a merchant myself, with profit to both of us,' he suggested. I pointed out that I had already advanced two weeks' wages, and he should settle up before asking for more.

A group of Bedouin girls were at the gate with kerchiefs full of eggs. 'Not now — next week,' I said. Certainly we need not worry about such provisions as long as we were the only inhabitants of the beach. They went away with reluctance. I was sorry, for they were pretty, gay children. The tallest one was a beautiful creature with tawny hair, brown eyes, and a dimpled face. Unlike the Arabs of the towns, they go unveiled, and enjoy almost full freedom.

II

The next day a storm of unusual fury burst on Carthage, and for forty-eight hours it raged. The noise was deafening: the crash of sea on the beach, the thrashing of wind through the palms and eucalyptus trees, and the beating of rain. Every time the rain slackened for a few minutes we hoped that the storm had passed, but another clap of thunder announced its return.

Every path on the steep Byrsa hill was a brown torrent cutting through the gravel and sand that overspread the mass of ruin on which the modern villas here are built. Such quantities of rubbish were brought down that the approach to our gate was endangered, and Jean had to keep clearing out the wayside ditch. The flat roof, cracked by the summer sun, leaked in every room.

During a lull on the second afternoon

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I went down the garden path and saw a jerboa standing on its stilt-like legs, scraping with its short front paws at the wire fence. One seldom sees these shy creatures, though the fields are riddled with their holes. Its burrow beneath the garden must have been filled with water.

The evening saw the end of the storm, and we went out to find what damage had been done. Boys were walking in the watercourses, with eyes fixed on the mud to pick up small treasures winnowed by the storm from the débris of ancient civilizations. Coins, bits of pottery, and chips of carved marble are washed from the ruins by every rain. The Arab goatherds and guides waded knee-deep on the beach searching for Roman and Punic remains scoured from the rubble cliffs.

The squatters in the ruins on the beach were gone. They had been washed and blown from their crevices, and had made the best of their way back to their winter quarters in the slums of Tunis. The storm had cleaned the shore of the disagreeable mess of summer. A layer of clean sand and shells lay over the beach, piled around the base of the ruined sea wall. The day was crisp — exhilarating after months of heat. The Mediterranean lay without a wrinkle, and the arid mountains across the gulf cut the blue sky with their saw-like ridges. It was a day that filled the mind with joy. It was while standing looking rapturously at this scene that we found on the sleek sands, glistening from the retreating wave, a smooth, round piece of rosy marble. It was a weight, perfect and clear-cut as if only yesterday the Phœnician peddler had used it to weigh out his precious stock of herbs.

With it safely in my pocket I packed the children back into the pram and started home, noting as I went how the sun shone red on the ruins up on the hill facing the gulf.

At our gate a small gray donkey stood, pulling a queer contraption of uneven wheels and rough planks which held, at great hazard, a load of vegetables. It belonged to Abdullah, the son of Mohammed. He was, as his proud father had said, extremely handsome, with a pale skin and finely shaped Turkish eyes. His stock, however, was poor. It looked as though he had swept up stale vegetables from the market of the day before. However, as I am weak enough to dislike causing disappointment, I bought some potatoes. He could not change ten francs.

'*Ça ne fait rien!*' he cried nonchalantly. '*Papa viendra! Payez Papa!*' As he went off I noticed that he limped.

'Ah!' said the delighted Mohammed when he came to bring me a chicken a day or two later. 'Madame has seen my son? You think he is beautiful, *hein?* Is he not white, as I said?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'he is a fine boy. But what is the matter with his foot? He had a dirty rag tied around it, and could not walk well.'

'It is of no importance,' he said. 'He scratched his ankle while descending from his cart one evening.'

'Tell him to go to the *pharmacie* and ask for some iodine,' I said. 'His foot may become poisoned.'

'*N'importe,*' he answered with a shrug that left this contingency to Allah. 'I shall come on Tuesday with eggs.'

'I doubt whether I shall need them,' I warned him. The whole neighborhood was bent on making us eat eggs.

III

Jean, Maria's husband, was a Maltese — that is, he was of the Phœnician stock, well mixed with Italian and Arab blood, that since the time of Dido has lived on the island, which is the remains of the land bridge between

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Europe and Africa at this point. As for Mohammed, he was like a bronzed gypsy, being a Berber. The North African Arabs vary greatly. There are those of purely Oriental physique like Mat, the shopkeeper at the corner, with the sallow skin, flat face, and almond eyes of the Mongol. Then there is the curly-haired, somewhat Turkish type, like Abdullah; and lastly the fair or red-headed ones with white skin and gray eyes, like the husband of my neighbor.

I thought as I walked on the terrace in the morning, looking out over the Gulf of Tunis, of the pirate fleets that had lurked here, bringing back their cargoes of Christian slaves from all parts of Europe. I thought of the little Irish fishing village of Baltimore, awakened one dark night by a band of pirates who seized every man, woman, and child, and carried them off to be sold as slaves in North Africa. Unwary fishing boats and coastal vessels were captured off the coasts of England and France, even up in the North Sea. The slave markets of Tangiers, Algiers, and Tunis received the hapless survivors of the Children's Crusade, tricked on board slave ships at Marseilles. Then a coal-black Mohammedan merchant might choose white girls for his harems on the Coasts of High Barbary. Only within the last hundred years have the greatest powers of Europe ceased to pay ransom to the Arab pirates. Everywhere one sees evidences of this infusion of white blood.

A train stopped at the station of Carthage, higher on the hill. My neighbor looked across from her roof-top, recognized someone coming down from the platform, and descended in haste. A few minutes later her husband passed outside my fence. He gave me dignified greeting, and entered his house. Soon I heard his voice raised in prayer from the corner of his courtyard. I never saw him without a puzzled feeling that I had seen him in a more familiar place. His red fez sat oddly above his thin, ruddy face with its blue eyes and sandy moustache. It struck me suddenly that he was the image of a highland gamekeeper I had known on an estate in Scotland. With that face and build he ought to be in a kilt, and raise his voice in a Presbyterian kirk. His wife was the fat, large-eyed type, with the opaque skin of the Semite, but his little boy was made in his image, with gray eyes and sandy hair.

IV

It was only rarely now that the small donkey cart drew up to our blue gate. Abdullah's wares were so bad that I refused to buy them.

'*Eh bien!*' he would cry jauntily. '*Au 'voir!*' He was the idol of his papa, and had grown overbearing. However, I observed that he still limped and that the dirty rag was still on his leg. I spoke of it again to Mohammed when he next appeared, but he shrugged the matter aside.

'Monsieur likes melons,' he said. '*Alors*, I have brought him a couple. These are what we call winter melons. Though small, this one will be like honey, I swear.'

We parted with mutual compliments, and I took the path across the fields which border the beach in Carthage, up over the shoulder of the hill to Ste. Monique, stopping now and then to trace the line of the ancient town from the huge blocks of stone and rubble raised over two thousand years ago by the hands of slaves. The sea front is rough with masses of masonry undermined and tipped out of line by the waves. Farther back are arches and floors from which the ornamental stone has been stripped. It is a dangerous playground. We had seen the bodies of dogs and even kids at the bottom of deep underground storage pits into

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which they had fallen. Often there is nothing to guard these holes. In one ruin the circular mouth of a deep pit fills the space between the doorposts. But deep as those subterranean chambers were, they were not as dangerous as the narrow shafts, sometimes twenty yards deep, which are said to be the openings to Punic tombs. These one may find particularly on the hill of Ste. Monique, overlooking Carthage.

At one point halfway up the hill our path led between two such deep shafts. On the left the corner of a mosaic pavement had broken off, and what remained overhung a great cavity. On the right a shaft plunged straight down without warning. A wet day or an overclouded evening might lead to a tragedy here. As we approached, the donkey cart of Abdullah appeared over the brow of the hill, with the young owner dangling his legs over the front. He still wore his bandage. The track was scarcely wide enough to take the wheels between the holes, and it gave me a grue to watch the cart bouncing down between them. Perhaps because he wanted to show off, the lad touched the little donkey with his stick as they passed. We had stepped up on one side to let the cart go by, and I held my breath as the wheels scraped the edges.

'*Attention!*' I cried involuntarily.

Abdullah shrugged, grinned at our concern, and touched the donkey again.

'I pass here every day,' he cried, and went on singing at the top of his voice.

V

As autumn led into winter the weather grew changeable. Sometimes for a week we would have rain every day, with thunder, strong wind, and black clouds. It was impossible to count on the wind. At breakfast it might be howling from the west, driving the rain through the vines of the pergola. Before lunch it would whistle round to the east, and send the water from the terrace in little tides under the front door. The sea was tempestuous, wild and brown and foaming near the shore, with a line of green toward the middle of the gulf. The waves leapfrogged toward the shore, one after the other, climbing up on each other's backs to dash higher and higher on the ruined sea wall, while the foam streamed back like hair. The flat plains which had been desert sands during the summer months began to show green. Grass grew lush, starved goats and donkeys and camels became fatter every day. Up on the slopes asphodel and lilies pushed out their long green leaves. Between storms we had days of magnificent weather, so calm that the sea was sleek with a certain glossiness that made all the clouds reflected in it look like scarcely moving icebergs. The waves hardly rippled on the shore. Dawn and evening were crisp, though clear, and noon pleasantly warm. We shortened our daily swim to a quick plunge, though the water was warmer than the air. Those were marvelous days on the beaches, which had long forgotten the filth of summer, when the twin peaks of Boukornine across the gulf were lovely in pale gray, and the little white villages on the opposite shore caught the afternoon sunlight in the folds of the wine-dark hills.

I was awakened one midnight toward the end of November by the beating of a drum out in the road. The noise went into the distance, rousing dogs, until I could hear it no more. Then it returned on a higher level, growing fainter and louder as the drummer walked around the circular roads of the hill of Carthage. A door slammed near by, and I began to hear the voices of our Arab neighbors in the courtyard. There was the sound of a small drum, and an excited chattering. Thus began Ramadan, the month when Mohammedans fast by day and have to endure

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disturbed nights, when their meals are prepared and eaten.

As the month drew to its close, night after night of restlessness began to have its effect on the Arab community. Even in Carthage we felt the general uneasiness. One evening I was standing on the terrace. The sea was olive green, and the sky full of soft clouds. Across the bay the hills were violet, and along the shore the empty villas stood peacefully. Nothing seemed to justify my disquiet. Then all of a sudden Mohammed appeared around the corner — but he was silent. Behind him walked a group of ragged, crying children.

I had not seen the *marchand* for some time, and was startled at his appearance. He was dressed in a dark camel-hair burnous and close-fitting turban, and looked ill. He answered my greeting in a hoarse voice so unlike his usual one that I was not surprised to see the tears streaming out of his eyes when he raised his face to tell me the price of eggs.

'What is the matter with you?' I asked.

'It is my son!' he groaned.

I had a horrible swift vision of the boy falling headlong down a Punic burial shaft from his cart.

'An accident?' I gasped.

'No, it was his leg,' he sobbed. 'It swelled up like this, and the doctor said it must be cut off.'

'I told you to be careful!' I said involuntarily, and then, 'Is he in the hospital?'

'No, no! I would not allow them to cut it off. I sent him down to the island of Djerba to be with his grandfather. My wife took him. I thought he would get well there. But now the news comes that he is dead. Oh, *mon fils, mon fils!* How white he was, and how beautiful! Madame knows!'

'It is very sad,' I said, vexed at the unnecessary tragedy, and reproaching myself for not having insisted on the iodine.

'Here, Madame,' Mohammed said, with a dreary gesture toward the small ragged children huddling behind him, 'are the rest of my children. I wish to give them to Madame. Let them become English. Send them to an English school, and allow my sons to serve their military duty in England. I myself will go on pilgrimage to Mecca.'

I was so taken aback that for a time I could only stutter about there being no military service in England, such as there was in France, and that the initial difficulties of entering British territory because of immigration laws were not easily overcome. Mohammed heard me decline the gift of his family in silence, his eyes fixed on the ground. Then he sighed. 'It is fate. . . . Madame owes me for a dozen eggs,' he said mournfully. I could not argue prices with him at this distressing time, and when I had paid him he stalked off with his head sunk between his shoulders, the children shuffling behind him.

'Those Arabs!' Jean exclaimed. He was tying up chrysanthemums in the garden, and had remained silent during this conversation. 'A visit to a *pharmacie*, and he would have saved his son. But no, he must neglect it. Neglect! It is the same with everything they do. They take a European villa, and they let it fall to pieces. They do not paint it. They let the roof leak. It is always thus. Madame, they are a people essentially nomadic. We Europeans,' he finished impressively, 'plan for the future. We are not fatalists. We consider ways and means — we do not neglect opportunities.'

Seeming to consider that he had said enough for one day, he went on with his work.

VI

January was the coldest within living memory. Jean was outraged by it, as

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he had been telling us how delightful winter was. Though it never actually snowed, the air smelt like snow. Rain fell heavily, and the wind blew fiercely for days together. Sometimes, while struggling on my daily walk around the Cathedral, I would look down at the low-lying peninsula between the gulf and the salt lake, and wonder why the heavy waves did not wash the villages away. But at the end of February the intense cold came to an end. The sun shone gloriously day after day, and the sea was deeply blue. The mountains almost disappeared in calm mists, and Salammbô Point seemed like a floating promontory in a fairy tale. Now the hillsides were magnificent with wild fennel, the pale green stalks crowned with a spread of yellow flowers. Stock, carnations, violets, freesias, cyclamens, and hyacinths bloomed in the gardens, but outside the fields outdid the gardens in color. Mustard, beans, colchicums, and marguerites flowered, and the ruins were gay with daisies, scarlet poppies, and marigolds.

The year had turned. From hour to hour, as the weeks fled along and the sun swung back from his winter orbit, Carthage and the adjoining villages began to wake up. Behind the iron fences the *chiens de garde* stretched restlessly and poked their noses between the bars. Cats, thin as witches after their winter vagabondage, dropped from the cornices of flat roofs to sniff hopefully at dustbins. Every fine week-end brought the *propriétaires* from Tunis to see after their property. Masons and painters carried their ladders and buckets through the lanes. The elderly house owners, or mothers of families too young for school, settled into their villas on the beach, working among the roses, geraniums, and honeysuckle of their formal gardens, where their birdcages hung in the shade of bougainvillæas. And then one morning we heard the melancholy cry of '*Charbon! Charbon!*' and saw the first Arab charcoal peddler of the season jogging down the narrow street on his quick-stepping donkey, while in front of him his laden camels stirred the ankle-deep dust which showed that the rains were over. Here was a true harbinger of summer.

Maria had grown more and more silent, and Jean spent less and less time in our garden. He was feverishly busy elsewhere, and one day he announced his new plans.

'There is room in one of these villages for a cinema,' he said. 'There is no such place of amusement between La Goulette and La Marsa. I have already chosen a suitable place, and am now prepared to offer shares to raise the capital for the enterprise.'

Pained though he was by our refusal to lend him money, Jean was not to be discouraged, and gave us a week's notice.

'I will continue to come daily, Madame,' Maria said quietly. 'He is sure that we shall become rich soon, but I prefer to know that my children will have their daily food.' Maria was also glad to see the houses being prepared for the summer influx. 'It will be more gay,' she said, 'especially for the children.'

'But what of a gardener for us?' I asked.

'Why not call Mohammed?' Jean suggested unexpectedly.

'I have not seen him for a long time,' I said.

'He went to the island of Djerba with his family,' Jean said with a sardonic smile. 'That was after his son's death, you will remember. There he stayed for some time. Then he left his old wife and the children. He returned here, acquired a young new wife, and will doubtless be starting a new family.'

'Another wife?' I said in amazement.

'He is a Mohammedan,' Jean said, and departed whistling.

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'You remember the eldest *Bédouine* who used to bring eggs from the *gourbi* where the camels were?' Maria asked. 'The pretty one with the curly hair and dimples? That is Mohammed's new wife.'

'Good heavens!' I exclaimed. 'She is a child! He is an old man!'

'She is sixteen, they say,' Maria answered. 'If Madame will come up the hill with me we shall find his new abode and ask his wife for eggs. You have noticed that they are becoming scarce again. We can also leave a message for Mohammed.'

It was a magnificent morning. The grain was ripe, and rippled in golden waves on the hillside. Our path led to a Roman cistern which had been newly thatched with weeds and fenced about with a thorn hedge. Outside, at a circular clay oven, the handsome young *Bédouine* was working. She recognized us, smiled, and beckoned. We asked her to let us watch.

Upon a wooden tray by her side were five uncooked loaves. Within the hollow oven was a fire of coals. The girl took each loaf, flattened it first on the palm of her hand, and then pressed it on the wooden platter until it was about half an inch thick and nearly a foot across. This done, she dipped her left hand into a tin of water, moistened the dough, and ran the water up over her arm so that it might not be scorched. Then, having transferred the dough adroitly on to her palm, she introduced it into the oven, slapping it on to the sloping surface of hot clay, where it stuck. She smoothed it quickly once or twice, and gave it a parting poke with one finger in the middle. By the time the fifth was in place the first was browning, and she laid stones over the coal beneath it, that it might not cook too fast. Her gestures were sure and deft, as if she were a bird making its nest, or a wasp building its cell.

'*Les œufs frais!*' sounded suddenly in our ears, and there was Mohammed coming down over the brow of the hill. I could scarcely believe my eyes. It was not so much a resurrection as a rebirth. Here was a young, beaming, handsome Mohammed in a new burnous and a crisp straw hat trimmed with marigolds — a bridegroom indeed! 'Ah, Madame,' he cried, 'the summer begins! Soon all will be *en train* again in Carthage.'

We explained our business, and his young wife continued steadfastly with her baking, not looking up until her lord and master bade her go in and find us some eggs. As I watched her stepping gracefully along I thought of the half-dozen ragged urchins whom Mohammed had tried to give me as a present, out of sight in Djerba with the worn-out wife. Life had began anew for Mohammed.

As we walked back to our gate we saw ass carts full of broken furniture jolting over the fields toward the ruins. The first squatters were arriving. As we entered I was startled by the opening of the grilled window next door. A woman with a head of marmalade-colored curls leaned out to spit some seeds into the gutter.

'*Bonjour, Madame!*' she called. It needed the presence of her little son Ahmadi to assure me that this was my neighbor. Her great brown eyes looked almost colorless beneath her brilliant hair, and her skin, which had seemed so white, now appeared olive in tint. However, her satisfaction was unbounded. Perhaps she had feared that her husband might transfer his affections to some young rival. No, she had no eggs to sell. Summer scarcity had begun. She beamed with satisfaction, and waved her hand to include the awakening villages. 'Now for, some gayety,' she seemed to say. 'The long, monotonous winter in Carthage is over.'

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WHAT ENGLAND WILL FIGHT FOR

BY LORD EUSTACE PERCY

I

To write on public affairs in the press of a foreign country is to incur automatically the suspicion of preaching. An Englishman expresses his views about the policies of his own nation; why should he do so if not to hint that America should follow suit?

Let me, therefore, say at the outset of this essay that I have no such thought in my mind. My purpose is, in fact, the exact contrary. Britain has interests which are not, and cannot be, America's. The interests of the two countries are, in many matters, so wide apart that they cannot even clash. What is, and ought to be, vital to the one is, and ought to be, profoundly indifferent to the other. And it is of these matters that I shall speak. I speak of them to an American audience precisely because Americans do not, and ought not to, think about them as Englishmen do; and it is where thoughts differ that understanding is most necessary.

There are not many democracies left in the world; the few that survive cannot think alike, but they had better know each other's thoughts. They are not likely to misunderstand each other seriously where their interests touch, for there their judgments on each other are checked by the practical instinct of compromise which guides most men, certainly most Englishmen and Americans, when they do business with each other. But, being democracies, with a free press, we cannot help judging each other also, every day of the week, in matters which, we thank God, are no concern of ours. Those are the judgments that rankle, as they are quoted back and forth in the free press of two countries.

Just now the commonest object of such judgments, in all the democracies of the world, is Britain's foreign policy. What is Britain playing at in Europe? In this essay I am going to try to provide an answer to that question. I am going to try to judge myself as an Englishman, in the hope that Americans may thereby be the better able to judge me rightly.

II

In 1919 Britain adopted a new attitude toward Europe. She threw all her traditions of foreign policy overboard. It was a revolution, though her people hardly knew it. But it was not, as my friend Frank Simonds used to think, a sentimental revolution. It had hard thinking behind it.

Britain's traditional attitude toward Europe during the previous three hundred and fifty years had been one of isolation. About once a century she had fought a great European war; but the wars had been great because she had always waited until the European pot boiled over. Geographically a part of Europe, she had cherished no ambitions on that continent; she had been

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concerned only to see that no European Power grew strong enough to attack her. So she had believed in the balance of power, but she would never join others in throwing the sword into either scale until the balance seemed to be irretrievably destroyed. Then she had intervened, to all appearances too late.

It was by this attitude that she had earned the name of 'perfidious Albion.' At its best, indeed, the attitude had been based on grounds very like those on which the United States bases her attitude of isolation to-day. 'Madam,' said Robert Walpole to his Queen in 1734, 'there are 50,000 men slain this year in Europe, and not one Englishman.' But at its worst it had come perilously near to encouraging other nations to exhaust themselves in order that Britain might step in and dictate peace. It was thus, for instance, that an English ambassador counseled Charles I to treat Gustavus Adolphus in the Thirty Years' War. He could be used 'to temper the fury of tyranny and to restore the equality of just government' because his 'course of victory' would stop there. 'The King of Sweden is not to be considered in his branches and fair plumes of one year's prosperity, but in his root, and so he is not to be feared.'

On the whole, however, the experience of history had pointed to the wisdom of Britain's ambiguous policy. Her long-delayed interventions in Europe had never actually come too late. She had little cause to be ashamed of her 'once a century' wars against Philip of Spain, against Louis XIV, against Napoleon, and against Germany. The wars which she was inclined to look upon as blunders had been such 'mid-century' wars as the Crimean War. Even the Seven Years' War, in which she had laid the foundations of her second empire, seemed half a blunder when it was considered, as it should be, in combination with the War of the American Revolution, in which she had lost her first empire. In short, the British tradition had been a profound and just dislike for 'preventive' wars.

But the experience of the Great War shook Britain's faith in her past policy. To allow lawlessness to come to a head before fighting it had always been to incur a heavy risk; but under modern conditions the risk was becoming too great. In the twentieth century, a general European war — still more, a world war — might mean the complete collapse of civilization. Britain, therefore, determined to throw over her old policy and to assume a joint responsibility with other nations for checking lawlessness on its first appearance, not only in Europe, but in the world as a whole. That, from Britain's point of view, was, and is, the significance of the League of Nations.

III

Unfortunately, the Covenant of the League, which was to be the charter of Britain's new policy, contains one fatal ambiguity.

The bulk of that document implies a view of international relations very like the American's or the Englishman's view of national government. According to this view, nations have no *absolute rights*, any more than the citizens of a state have such rights. In international affairs, as in national affairs, one man's rights are always to some extent his neighbor's wrongs. Possession is nine points of international law, but it is never the whole ten points. The only absolute right possessed by any state is the right guaranteed by the American Constitution to the individual citizen: the right to 'due process of law.' That, accordingly, is the only right which, in most of its clauses, the Covenant guarantees to the members of the

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League. No member of the family of nations may make war until it has submitted its case to the judgment or mediation of its fellow members; nor, having done so, may it make war for a purpose unanimously condemned by them. Any nation which does so make war is to be treated as an aggressor, and the duty is laid upon all other nations to resist such aggression.

But this collective guarantee has two aspects. It is a guarantee to the possessor against arbitrary aggression; but it is also a guarantee to the dissatisfied that the 'process of law' is a real one. The machinery of conciliation is to be open to any claim, however novel, and to any change, however far-reaching.

If, in any community, property is in the hands of very few citizens, a wider distribution of it is inevitable, either by law or by revolution. But, if it is redistributed by process of law, a balance will soon be reached. In any civilized community property will always be widely enough distributed to secure a majority in defense of its rights. And if this is true of property rights in domestic affairs, it is equally true of sovereign rights in international affairs. In spite of all the hot-headed talk that is going about nowadays, the family of nations is not divided into 'haves' and 'have-nots.' It is a civilized community where a balance of rights has already been achieved. The balance may need some adjustment, and the adjustment may entail some sacrifice; but no nation stands to gain by a general challenge to existing rights. In such a balance, but only in such a balance, can the world find a lasting peace.

That is the spirit of the Covenant in nearly all its clauses. But into the middle of this reasonable and flexible document was thrust one clause which, on the face of it, seemed to represent quite another view of international relations. Article X seemed to confer on every member of the League an absolute right to be protected in the enjoyment of all its existing possessions. Ever since the first meeting of the League at Geneva, efforts have been made to water down this Article, to interpret it away. It has been generally, though not formally, agreed that it means no more than Article XVI. But there the words stand, and they are the most quotable words in the Covenant. In every major dispute in which the League has been involved, the peoples of the world, if not their governments, have tacitly assumed the absolute right of China to be protected in the possession of Manchukuo, the absolute right of Abyssinia to the possession of all the territories conquered by Menelik, the absolute right of France to claim the full observance of all the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles.

The point hardly needs to be insisted on before an American audience. It was against Article X that American opinion instinctively revolted in 1919. What Americans do not, perhaps, fully realize is that at that time a large section of English opinion revolted against it no less strongly, and that the British representatives at the Peace Conference would have been glad to see it eliminated from the Covenant.

IV

The ambiguity of the Covenant is all the more serious because it was drafted and adopted before the terms of the peace settlement were decided. Article X backed a bill which the backers had never seen and of which they did not know the amount. Many Englishmen were, and are still, disposed to accept the Peace Treaties as, on the whole, the best settlement (apart from the reparations clauses) that could have been expected in the circumstances of the time. But very few Englishmen have ever been pre-

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pared to regard the settlement as in all respects a permanent one to be permanently guaranteed. Let us look for a moment at its general character.

The first condition of a lasting peace is that it should be deliberately made to last. But that test was just the one that neither the statesmen nor the peoples of the world applied to the treaties of 1919. They prided themselves on applying more ambitious tests. The victory of the Allies was to be used to 'vindicate justice,' and 'justice' meant three things. It meant punishment — a lesson to the aggressor that aggression does not pay. It meant preventive restrictions — a diminution of the aggressor's power to disturb the peace in the future. It meant a new map of Europe based upon 'the rights of small nations.' From these three principles were derived all the clauses of the treaties: reparations and the confiscation of the German colonies; the disarmament of Germany and the demilitarization of the Rhineland; the breakup of the Austrian Empire and the transfer of German and Hungarian territory to Poland and Rumania.

Now, whatever the merits of this settlement from the point of view of 'justice,' it obviously had one grave defect: it could be maintained in its entirety only by a show of force constantly displayed for at least a generation. It had been imposed on Germany with every circumstance of ignominy, but it left her still the strongest nation in Europe. She was not expected to accept it and she retained the power to upset it. Her power of aggression against Western Europe was indeed greatly diminished; she could no longer hope to conscript the inhabitants of Posen and Bohemia, of Croatia and Transylvania, for a war against England and France. But Western Europe had gained this added security at the cost of splitting up Central Europe into a number of weak states, each struggling to establish a new authority over mixed populations. These states could only withstand German domination if they could rely for protection upon the armies of Western Europe. Western Europe had thus gained a new security on the Rhine and the Meuse at the cost of undertaking new responsibilities on the Danube and the Vistula.

And, quite frankly, Britain has never been prepared to accept these new responsibilities, so far as they involve in the last resort an obligation to fight. She has been prepared, as it were, to nurse the new Europe into a new state of peaceful self-government. She has been prepared to join in protecting it against violence until it grew strong enough to settle its outstanding problems by peaceful negotiation. She has hoped to convert an imposed settlement into an agreed settlement by gradual modification of the 'unequal' provisions of the treaties. But she has not been prepared to guarantee the principle of 'nationality' in the years after the Great War any more than she had been prepared to guarantee Talleyrand's principle of 'legitimacy' in the years after the Napoleonic Wars. In her view, a state has no more absolute right in the twentieth century to include within its frontiers all persons of the same race than a 'legitimate' sovereign had in the nineteenth century to the blind obedience of all persons born under his rule. And she has been confirmed in this view by observing, in the new racial propaganda of Germany, the disastrous extremes to which this principle of nationality may be pushed.

V

In other words, Britain's foreign policy since the war has been based on a pretty clear idea of what she ought to work for, but on no clear idea at all of what she ought to fight for. It is just

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this that both Americans and Europeans find so difficult to understand. Americans have been accustomed to think of their own foreign policy in terms of the Monroe Doctrine: a clear declaration that the United States will fight for certain things and that she will disinterest herself in all other things whatsoever. Europeans, on their part, have been accustomed to think of the family of nations as one great society — a society which in the Middle Ages was called 'Christendom' and in the eighteenth century 'the system of Europe.' Hence the modern European *dogma of the 'indivisibility* of peace.' In such a society there can be no limited liabilities; all its members stand or fall together.

Nevertheless, an Englishman must feel that there is much to be said for his noncommittal attitude. It is, after all, the attitude of every individual English or American citizen toward the government of his own country. Every such citizen is a policeman; he is bound by the common law to the duty of repressing civil commotions and of using all the force that may be necessary for that purpose. But in practice he never dreams of having to fight for law and order, or for the constitution; his idea of public spirit is to work for these things as a voter or politician or municipal administrator. In an extraordinary crisis he may rise in his wrath against disturbers of the peace, but he would be rightly shocked if he were told, for example, that he must not vote for Prohibition unless he is prepared himself to fight the rum-runner. Why should he not adopt the same attitude toward international affairs? Why should he not work to maintain the broad outlines of the peace settlement in Central and Eastern Europe without committing himself to fight on the Danube or the Vistula?

True, international affairs are different, because there is no policeman round the corner to whom members of the family of nations may delegate the duty of enforcing respect for treaties. There was a time when every nation kept a standing army or could hire mercenaries to fight its battles; but that time is long past. To-day, if force has to be used between nations, every citizen must take up arms. But when the Englishman is reminded of this hard fact he is inclined to answer that, if international law requires him to expose himself to such hazards, so much the worse for international law.

So crude an answer may shock the jurist, but there is truth behind it. If it is true that the sovereign state derives its just powers from the consent of its citizens, it is even more true that the law which reigns among the family of nations reigns only by the consent of its members. For that reason, international law ought rightly to be more flexible than domestic law — whereas, in fact, it is more rigid. Even more than domestic law it ought to be so reasonably conceived and administered that only the wanton criminal will desire to break it. Against the exceptional wanton the Englishman is in principle prepared to use force, whatever the cost; but if he sees Europe split in two by an attempt to preserve the full rigidity of existing treaties, he begins to look round for a policeman — and is he unreasonable if he suggests that the right policeman is the nation, or group of nations, which stands to gain most from this rigidity? Is he unreasonable in thinking that the main burden of defending the peace settlement on the Danube and the Vistula should rest with the Little Entente, with Poland and with Russia?

Unreasonable or not, the Englishman can claim that this is, in fact, the principle embodied in the Covenant of the League. The authors of the Covenant deliberately refrained from placing on all members of the family of nations

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indiscriminately the obligation to fight in defense of international law. They placed on all the obligation to boycott the aggressor — they sought, in other words, to abolish among members of the League the old doctrine of 'neutrality,' just as under domestic law every citizen is forbidden to give aid and comfort to the criminal — but they reserved the policeman's duty to those nations only (to quote the Locarno phrase) whose 'military situation' and 'geographical position' might fit them to perform it effectively in the particular case.

VI

Yet it is at this point that the Englishman must begin to confess his failure to live up to his own principles. By this Locarno test, there are large regions of the world where Britain herself is singled out for the part of policeman. She must play a large part in resisting aggression on the settled frontiers of Western Europe; she must play nearly the whole part in resisting aggression elsewhere, *wherever such resistance involves the use of sea power.* But until recently her people have closed their eyes to these hard facts. They have allowed themselves to be blinded by a phrase — by the two words 'economic sanctions.' Those words represent a fatal misinterpretation both of the Covenant itself and of the economic facts of the modern world.

Article XVI was never regarded by its authors as having invented a new method of stopping wars. They never put any faith in economic sanctions, except as a reënforcement of military power. They knew that the war of 1914–1918 would have been shortened and many lives spared if the blockade of Germany had been more quickly and more completely effective. They believed, therefore, that if an aggressor knew from the outset that the military resistance he would encounter from his immediate adversaries would be reënforced by a universal economic boycott, he would rarely, if ever, be willing to incur that risk. But they remembered also that if the German army had reached Paris and the Channel ports in 1914 the blockade might never have been established. An aggressor who believes that he can count on rapid military victory will not be much frightened of subsequent attempts to rob him of the fruits of his victory by economic pressure.

All this has been forgotten. There grew up among the pacific peoples of Europe, and especially in Britain, a vague idea that economic pressure was an alternative to, not a reënforcement of, military resistance. There was to be peace in the sense that there would be no more messy fighting. O brave new world, where the ministers of justice need no longer grapple with the violent man, but could starve him decently into submission!

Now this was never anything but a dream. Nations are not so economically interdependent as that. There is only one nation in the world that can be starved out before it can have time to win an effective military victory. That nation is Great Britain. To other governments who may contemplate aggression, the threat of economic sanctions is little more than a warning that they must be fully armed and provisioned in advance, and must strike quickly at their enemy's vitals. It therefore puts a premium on the *fait accompli* — on peacetime armaments, on economic isolation, and on sudden attack in overwhelming force by land and air. And unless such force can be met by adequate armed resistance and counterattack, economic sanctions will be useless as a protection and futile as a deterrent.

That is the lesson of the Abyssinian

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dispute. We now know that Italy ran little risk from an economic siege, *provided she could finish the war in one campaign.* She need have run no risk at all if she had laid in somewhat larger stocks of petrol in advance. Only the British and French fleets could have prevented a rapid military victory, and they could have prevented it only by fighting. For the prime function of a fleet is not blockade. That is a superstition which has no basis in history and has fatally confused all discussions of naval disarmament since the war. The prime function of a fleet is to give mobility to the armed forces of its possessor and to deny mobility to the armed forces of the enemy.

VII

Abyssinia, the Rhineland, Spain — in the last few months these successive shocks have undoubtedly reawakened the British people to realities. They have turned from vague general commitments which do not really commit to a detailed consideration of their special and limited responsibilities.

It is easy enough to define those responsibilities. The integrity of the British Commonwealth of Nations itself, the inviolability of the settled frontiers of Western Europe, the independence of Egypt, the preservation of the Mediterranean as an international highway — these are the elements of international law which Britain can and must defend, if necessary, by force of arms. These constitute her Monroe Doctrine.

But does this definition of, so to speak, her police functions mean that she will disinterest herself in other issues? Will she cease to work for a settled international order in other regions — in Central and Eastern Europe, and in the Pacific? Will she refuse to play the citizen where she cannot undertake to play the policeman? In a word, is she retreating toward her traditional policy of isolation?

The answer to this question is still in doubt. It depends on a balance between two considerations, on the eventual outcome of two tendencies which are working in the world to-day. On the one hand is the tendency toward something like a new war of religion, the war between Fascism and Communism. On the other is the tendency toward a more realistic examination of the world's real economic and social needs.

If the first tendency comes to dominate international relations, if Europe as a whole goes the way of Spain, Britain will undoubtedly retire into isolation. She believes in neither of these rival creeds. It will not be the first time that she has been forced into such retirement. A century ago Canning voiced her determination to take neither side in the conflict between 'legitimacy' and the 'revolution,' between the dying struggles of absolutism and the first mutterings of the storm which was to break over Europe in 1848.

But though this conflict of creeds seems at the moment increasingly to occupy the front of the international stage, it does not occupy the centre. Other nations in Europe besides Britain are refusing to take sides in it, and even those nations whose statesmen seem most active in fomenting it are perhaps growing a little weary of such incitements. If the young men of Germany or Italy contemplate war, it is not as a crusade against Communism, but rather as a desperate alternative to unemployment. It is, in truth, the problem of unemployment that holds the centre of the international stage, as it holds the centre of the stage in the domestic politics of every country.

We have no space here to develop this thesis, but, by way of illustration,

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let us glance at the history of Germany since 1919. Accustomed during four years of war to the life of the blockade, forced by the terms of peace and by her own blunders to continue that life in the years immediately succeeding the war, Germany has increasingly attempted to make a virtue of economic isolation. To-day National Socialist Germany seems bent on making a religion of it.

The direct consequence of Germany's isolation was unemployment. That unemployment, particularly among her educated youth, became the breeding ground for Communism. National Socialist Germany must therefore create employment — industrial employment for as many as possible, and especially for married men; some sort of disciplined work for the rest, and especially for the young unmarried men. Hence Herr Hitler's employment policy: rearmament and the labor camp.

And since even rearmament could not supply employment for youth as it issued from the labor camp, some further period of disciplined work must be found for them, lest they ferment in idleness. To enroll them in 'paramilitary' formations was too dangerous; the events of 1934 had proved that. Hence conscription. If war comes to Europe it will come, not at the moment when a great new German conscript army is ready for the field, but when the youth of Germany begin to pass out of that army, their years of service completed, and can still find no permanent employment.

Amid the rising clamor of nationalist and internationalist propaganda it may well be too late to attempt a solution of these underlying economic problems. But there is an undoubted demand in the world to-day that the attempt should be made. And that demand many Englishmen feel it to be their bounden duty to meet, if they can. While they recognize that the League has muddled sanctions, they feel even more keenly that it has muddled conciliation. This, in their eyes, is the worse failure.

We have already suggested the cause of that failure, the rigid conception of international relations derived from the incautious words of Article X of the Covenant. If there is yet time to correct that mistake, Englishmen will not willingly abandon their original ideal of the League, the ideal of a great coöperative commonwealth of nations. According to that ideal, the League was to be an instrument of economic coöperation; it was to forestall disputes by continuous discussion of national needs; it was to create an international civil service entrusted with the task of working out policies for mutual benefit. These were the things for which Englishmen were prepared to work in 1919, and they are still prepared to work for them to-day.

Pure sentiment, out of relation with the hard facts? Better to run no risk of entanglement in such delicate and dangerous problems? Better to entrench oneself on the carefully defined ground for which one is prepared to fight, refusing to venture into the no man's land of general international coöperation and conciliation? Perhaps. The purpose of this article has been to depict and explain, not to argue or justify. But in choosing between these two attitudes the Englishman may well ask himself a question. If war comes, how will the future historian describe it? As a war of religion? Or of wanton aggression? A war of revenge for an unwise peace? A war of nerves, irritated by armaments? Or, perhaps, as a war of popular ferment, an explosion caused by economic pressures which a more constructive statesmanship could have eased in time?

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AFTER APPOMATTOX

BY MAJOR DAVID N. WALKER

[A son of the Confederacy, Major David N. Walker served through the Civil War in the Otey Battery, whose enlistments were, for the most part, men of Richmond. After Appomattox, Major Walker returned to Richmond, where he came to assume a position of prominence in social and civic activities. His description of the aftermath of the war is apposite at this time, when *Gone with the Wind* is commanding so much attention.—The Editors]

I

I saw General Lee return to the army after the surrender, his men cheering him and breaking their swords and muskets, and weeping. He was erect on 'Traveller' and looked like a man and soldier. I saw the apple tree cut down. I saw Grant and Sheridan as they rode to visit General Lee. I met several general officers as they passed through our camp, and they behaved with knightly consideration, offering to aid us in any way, and if they had not done it we should have starved. We were paupers, without pocketbooks or country, but we were Confederate soldiers, with a principle and a country which shall yet be.

The most of the Battalion reached Lynchburg and surrendered there. I surrendered the skeleton at Appomattox, some two or three through General Loring. You will find it in the records. I bid good-bye to soldier life. You can imagine my feelings; I cannot describe them. Though whipped out of my boots, they left me the old ragged coat which covered my heart, and the old slouch hat which covered my head, and I venerate them both and was satisfied then, as I am now, that my heart was right, and the next generation of Yankees will think my head was right also.

Having so few men to surrender, we soon received our papers, and, with my parole in my pocket, I was among the first to leave Appomattox. Two others were with me. Glad to get away, we traveled all day at a good gait, passing along the road decaying dead horses, broken wagons, and artillery wheels, and all kinds of army wreckages. We reached the Appomattox River just before dark, and stopped at a neat brick house to see if we could get shelter for the night and something to eat. A rap at the door, after some delay and commotion inside, resulted in the door being opened just a crack and a query as to what we wanted. We told them we were Confederate soldiers, returning from the surrender. They seemed doubtful, but when we assured them that we were truthful, and asked them to look on our uniforms, the door flew open and four or five ladies rushed out and kissed us, weeping, made us happy at their greeting, so honest and earnest, and insisted upon feeding us and waiting on us, satisfied that the surrender, of which they had not heard, had taken place.

It was the house of the Reverend Mr.

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Parkinson, a Presbyterian preacher, and I think it was about four miles from the High Bridges. They had good cause to be suspicious of us. The night before, a gang of Yankee stragglers had been there, and their outrageous conduct culminated in their demanding from Mr. Parkinson the key of the room in which the ladies had locked themselves. He refused. They threatened him. He was as brave as Julius Cæsar, and still refused. They then saturated the passage floor with kerosene oil (I saw it), and said they would fire it unless the door was opened. He refused, and the women refused, preferring death. Such bravery and courage must have discouraged them, for they did not carry out their threat, but left them. I thought, 'What shall I find at home, or shall I find anything?'

The next day I left my companions on the Buckingham road, and cut across the country to Amelia C. H. I approached my house from the side through the woods, and as I struck the road leading to the house I saw it standing. I had to pass through the stable lot, and close to the stable. I was surprised to see a chicken, and to hear a horse eating in the stable — an old fellow that I had left as no-account. Looking in the house, I saw not a living soul. But I found them there, and you can imagine what a happy rejoicing we had — what suspense, what agony, they had suffered, and so had I! If ever we felt grateful to God, it was then and there.

Greeting over, I remember my attempt to help Mother cook the next morning. One of those old-fashioned open fireplaces, with a long iron bracket to swing pots on, wood fire, oven top covered with ashes, and sweet potatoes and ash cake cooked in them. All I knew how to cook was black-eye peas and I was in the way, so I acted only as helper in swinging this long iron thing out and hanging the pots on it and then swinging it back.

Fortunately our house was situated so near the road that the marauders must have thought there was no use going there, and none had been there except two claiming to be couriers carrying dispatches to Richmond announcing the surrender. As the surrender had not then taken place, of course, it was a Yankee trick, and they were fed and went on. All of our neighbors had been pillaged and abused. Here I must say in justice to the Yankees that these outrages were perpetrated by stragglers, as they were very strict in their orders to prevent such things and punish severely those who were caught.

II

A short while after reaching home, the alarm was sounded that two Yankees were coming down the road; and I went out to meet them in my uniform, for I had no other clothes. It was a captain and his orderly. He asked for feed for his horse. Certainly, for though I had sold all forage to the artillery, and cattle to same, the Yankees had run off our men from the forage; and though General Walker had fed me on my own tenderloin steaks, the cattle very wisely concluded, after the wagon train was burned, to return home. The captain was a gentleman — he was from Boston, and happened to know or knew of the people I knew there, and we had a pleasant chat. The dinner bell rang. He arose to go, and said he hoped I did not think he had come to impose upon me for a dinner, for I had asked him to go in. I told him certainly not. The old Virginia custom was, when the bell rang, to ask the visitor to dinner, and I told him also that he would get nothing but bacon and corn bread. Like a gentleman, he accepted.

I then told him I saw that he was a gentleman and could understand; that in addition to my wife there were sev-

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eral ladies, whose husbands were in the army, who had taken refuge there for protection, and that they looked upon a Yankee as an incarnation of the Devil, and he must not be surprised if they did not raise their eyes or talk. They did neither, and so we talked and ate our victuals, and he seemed to enjoy them. We resumed our places on the porch, and soon after doing so he handed me a printed list of supplies, telling me he had orders to distribute them to the destitute on their return from Appomattox. The destitute! The destitute! I was destitute, but they had made me so.

He said, 'I can give you one beef, one barrel of flour, etc. Take your pencil and mark off what you want.'

'I have no pencil. I want everything in your line, but will take nothing.'

He seemed surprised that, having nothing but bacon and corn bread, and a precious little of that, I should decline. I told him I was a Confederate soldier on parole, and was not prepared to eat dirt furnished by the United States Army.

My precious little Mary came out about that time, and he took a fancy to her, — he could not help it, — and after playing awhile offered her some money. She shrank from it and would not take it. He expressed surprise that one so young should have that feeling. I thought so too, but she would not take it.

Afterwards he said in a very gentlemanly manner that individually he would like to lend me fifty dollars, as I had but twenty-five dollars in Confederate money. I declined and he asked why. I told him because I was a Confederate soldier, but not a beggar, and I did not know that I should ever be able to pay it. He asked me if I would lend him a bag, as he thought me incorrigible, since I had also declined to accept a pass to Boston, saying, 'Brand my rebel uniform "Golgotha." I may or I may not undertake the journey. I have no other.'

He called up his orderly and gave him some order, and he trotted off with the old Confederate bag, patched and 'holy,' and soon returned with it full. As the captain bade me good-bye, and prepared to mount, he told his orderly to put the bag on the porch, and, saluting me in the most courteous manner, he said, 'Major, there is a bag of coffee; you can manure your land with it or drink it' — and rode off. I drank it and thought afterwards I was foolish not to have taken everything they offered me, as subsequently they took everything from me which I had not offered them. He was a man, a gentleman, an American. I think his name was Cambridge or Abbot, one of the commissaries of Hancock's corps.

After this, our troubles commenced; they were almost daily, chiefly from stragglers and of such a nature as not only to worry but to make me desperate. I give you some few instances.

One of my neighbors brought me a note for one hundred dollars gold, signed by another neighbor, for a horse bought from my head man, a Negro named Scott: stolen, of course. When I knew he was in the stable alone, I went to see him. 'Scott,' I said, 'you stole my horse, and sold it to Mr. Rowlett, and old Forgy Graves has given me the note, and you stole two cartloads of corn and carried it to the mill and sold the meal.' He denied this. I produced the note. He confessed and begged for mercy. I drew my pistol and made this proposition: 'You can either agree to protect my property from those Yankee stragglers, — and if you do I forgive you your theft, and will give you a horse when these times are over, — or else I will blow your brains out if you are not faithful.' He accepted the proposition, and promised to protect my property, and I think he tried faithfully to do it.

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He had several scuffles with marauders when they tried to steal, and that was almost daily, and one day he came and told me that three of them had overpowered him and carried off three horses. I cut across the field and headed them off in a cut in the railroad and seized the bridle of the lead horse. 'Let go, you rebel, or I will shoot you!' 'Shoot,' I said, 'but I will hold on to this horse.' I knew the cowardly wretch was not going to shoot. Just then an Irishman on foot, passing by, cried out, 'What are you gintlemen rowing about?' I said the 'gintlemen' were trying to steal my horses. 'Why don't you tell the provost marshal?' 'I have sent him word.' Presto! My kind Irish friend and the three rogues, jumping off their horses, took to their heels in the woods, and I led my horses back to the stable.

A great many soldiers returning from the surrender of North Carolina used to stop with us on the journey, whether on foot or horse. On one occasion five or six Yankee stragglers, all on stolen horses, hailed me from the far side of the garden fence, and I went out to see what they wanted. They wanted to stay all night. I told them they could not. They would sleep in the barn. No, they would not. Then they 'guessed' they would burn it down, or something of that sort. I asked them to wait a minute, and went in and armed my guests, about the same number as the enemy, and marched them out. I told those fellows we were Confederate soldiers, and they might just as well deploy their skirmishes, for if they did not break that road in three minutes I would open fire on them. They wheeled their horses, and went in a gallop. I notified the provost marshal, and they were captured on the stolen horses about two miles from our house.

One day a large party of horsemen rode through the wheat field in front of the house, planted their headquarters banner, dismounted, and approached the house. I met them with my old uniform on, on the front porch. The general, for such he was, asked me whose house it was, and what was the name on the map; said he was very tired and would like to take a rest. I asked him in the parlor, where there was a sofa, and invited him to take a nap. I went on the porch, where his staff had assembled, and they were very gentlemanly men, and I asked who he was. General Miles, they said; that he had not entirely recovered from a wound he received around Petersburg, and had to rest after a ride. His division had halted in the road for dinner, and immediately went to work to cook it by tearing up my fence rails, which ran by the road for a quarter of a mile, and soon some hundred or so of cattle were turned in the wheat, just then beginning to make a good start for heading.

The general sent for me to come in; one of his staff had been drumming on the piano, and another had a little bare-legged darky named Danne, about five years old, on his back, playing circus. One of them had tapped on my wife's door, and she had opened it and closed it in his face. The general was lying on the sofa, and I sat in a chair by the window. We had a pleasant chat, until he commenced to chide me, asking me if I was n't tired of fighting in such a cause, culminating in saying he never saw anything but our backs from the time we left Richmond and Petersburg until we reached Appomattox.

I suppose I must have been mad, and must have asked him in a defiant, mad tone, half Scotch and half Virginian, if he was n't General Miles, for he raised up and asked me why I asked him. I told him I might have known his back, but never saw his face; that he was lying on that sofa suffering from a wound received in his side at Petersburg from

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General Mahone, and I happened to be attached to General Mahone's division, but was not engaged in that fight, and he ought not to chide me. He changed like a gentleman, and said that Mahone had whipped him fairly, and I think he said it was the second time, and that he ought not to have said what he did. He had gotten up and walked to the window, and throwing the blinds open, and seeing the cattle, asked me why I had not driven them off the wheat; and I told him they were not my cattle, and they had just as much right to eat the wheat as the men to burn the fence rails, and I left him and went in the porch again. I had been there some time when a courier came up with a dispatch and went in. I soon discovered there was something up. The general came out, and, standing in the doorway, he handed me a dispatch. It said something about Jeff Davis being captured in woman's clothes, I remember, by somebody. I read it, and handed it back. 'What do you think of that?' he said. I said I did n't think. 'You are obliged to think.' 'That is one thing the United States Army can't make me do if I don't want to.' 'Do you doubt about him being captured in woman's clothes?' 'No, I don't. I know he was n't.'

Using some emphatic language, and raising himself and his arm still higher, he said, 'If I had him, I would hang him as high as Heaven, without judge, jury, or court-martial.' In about ten days he had him in irons at Fortress Monroe. Miles later became the General in Chief of the United States Army.

III

On one occasion at night my wife went to the basement door to answer some raps, and found several Negro soldiers who demanded something to eat, and alarmed her, she said. I told her it was very galling, but she had better furnish them and prevent a row. We had no servant, so she had to cook something for them and we had no row.

During these troublesome times our dear little Mary was taken sick, and we had just heard of the death of Grandfather Barney in Mobile. Our poor little girl had meningitis, and the doctors had told us that it was only a question of time when she would pass away.

Old Doctor Holcomb, one of our neighbors, had come to see me soon after I got home to ask me a great favor, to lend him my faithful mare, Mary. A reward of $25,000 was offered for his son, James P. Holcomb, and he wanted him to go to Canada. Of course I loaned him the horse, but his son would not go and he brought it back. He used to be my father's family physician when he lived in Lynchburg. He was a homeopathic. Hearing of Mary's extreme illness, he came to offer his services, not to interfere with the three doctors who were attending her, and I thanked him and told him, as the others had given her up, neither I nor they had any objections to his trial, and he commenced his treatment. We had no candles and used pine knots for lights. While Mother and I had gone out, Fannie and then little Carrie and Mamie — now Aunt Carrie Borland and Mamie Baugham — would watch our dying child by the flickering light.

I was standing sentinel in the yard to watch for the nightly Yankee prowlers and, on the plea of humanity and death, warn them off. A soldier came looking for something to eat. We had some eggs or something, and declined pay for them. I had told him of our condition — a dying child — no lights at night — nothing for a dying child. An hour or so afterwards that man returned; he had gathered up ends of burned candles, all through the wagon train, and it seemed the greatest pleas-

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ure to him to bring them. My heart softened to that man in a greater degree than it had taken the opposite direction against General Miles. I wish I knew his name. To me he was a man, and he furnished the cup of water, but our poor child died.

I had to find someone to make a coffin for her, and then the timber to make it of. We buried her under the bush where she often played, close to our bedchamber, and old Mr. Berkeley buried her. When we moved back to Richmond, we brought her back and placed her at the side of little sister in Holly Wood. Since then Carrie and Norma have been laid beside her, and four such children in one family rarely live and die leaving such a sweet and Christian example.

IV

The Yankees after a while put the railroad in order, and commenced running trains. Their chief delay was crossing the Appomattox. I knew I should starve where I was, and determined to go to Richmond to see what could be done. My twenty-five dollars Confederate money did not pay my way, and as the darkies about the place had accumulated some greenbacks, by selling to the Yankees, I borrowed enough from them to go to Richmond. There was no schedule running of trains, and I went to the station to await the return of one which had gone up the road. While waiting, a servant came with a message from my wife, to hurry home, some soldiers were there. On my way I met another: 'Please to hurry up.' At the big gate I met her, and she told me two Yankees were there trying to get Henrietta, our nurse, out of the house.

As I reached the house one was standing in the porch, the other in the yard. They both saluted me, and I asked them what they wanted. The one in the porch, a Dutchman, said he wanted to marry Henrietta. I told him I would send for her and she came out. I said, 'This man says he wants to marry you; do you want to marry him?' She said, 'No.' 'Then go back to the nursery.' And reaching back behind the door, for I was standing on the threshold, I seized a double-barreled shotgun, loaded with buckshot, and, cocking it, gave them to understand that that girl had asked my protection, and, though there were two of them, I would certainly kill one if either of them moved. The Dutchman appealed to the major, to show he was a gentleman. I told them I would kill a major as soon as I would a private, on such an errand, and they must mount their horses and leave before I uncocked my gun, and they went off grumbling.

I immediately went to the dining room, where I had to keep my horse to keep her from being stolen, saddled her, and rode over to Judge Weisiger's, where the provost marshal or colonel of some Ohio regiment had headquarters. I made my report, adding that the men went off with threats. He asked me if I had taken the oath. I had not. Then he could not furnish me with a guard unless I took it. I told him I was a paroled Confederate soldier, or rebel, if he chose to call it so, and was entitled to protection, but I could not take the oath until the last Confederate surrendered. In the course of conversation, I found out he was the brave fellow that rode the gray horse in the charges at Appomattox, and I expressed my gratification that he was not killed, as I had tried to get the men to kill him. He found out that I was on the bay horse by the barn as they charged, and said I tried to kill him, too. I told him I did not; did not have my pistol, and went through the motions only by snapping my finger at him. We got chummy.

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He wanted to give me a written order to shoot either of those men that came on my place. I told him I did not want to kill anybody. He said that was the major of his regiment, the biggest rascal in the United States, and the man — the Dutchman — was his cook; that the major was then under arrest and would be court-martialed very soon, and he would add this to the other charges. The cook, he said, he would put in irons.

We do not know whether it was that night or very soon afterwards that my wife woke me saying that someone was trying to get in the nursery. This adjoined our room, and had a door leading into the yard. I took my pistol and went to the door, when I heard the noise, and the parties outside were either cutting around the lock with a knife or using a brace and bit, I forget which. My pistol was an old-fashioned self-cocking one, and I thought I would shoot through the door low down to disable, but not to kill. The old thing went up all right with a click, but did not come down, and I suppose they heard the noise, for my wife gave the alarm: 'Here they go! Here they go!' as she saw them from the front window.

It was a beautiful moonlight night. I went to the front door, seized the double-barreled shotgun, and went out in the yard to get a shot at them as they ran through the wheat field, and I let fly with both barrels of buckshot — they fell or disappeared. The question was, What was to be done? If I had killed them, their mates would kill me. I could not protect my family by remaining, and if I could get on my horse I did not think they could catch me.

We waited until daybreak, and I went out very cautiously to see the result of my shooting. To my delight I found they had played the old soldier, and had wallowed in the wheat; I found no blood, and never trace of them afterwards. We thought it might have been the same major and his cook, but it could not have been if the colonel had carried out his statements, and no doubt he did.

As these exciting scenes diminished we thought we would look for the silver which Father had buried on the approach of the army at night. Before he left he told me where to find it, and Willie and I went to look for it at the place designated. We could not find it in the ravine mentioned, and my wife suggested we take a ramrod and follow the ravine down. We finally struck the tin box which contained it. It was as much as we could do to carry it to the house, and I thought and hoped it must be full of gold, but it turned out to be water, which had soaked in. In the fall we moved back to Richmond, and Cousin Dave Stewart kindly let me use part of his office. It was in the building known since as the Lee House, General Lee occupying the upper part on Franklin Street between 7th and 8th. Though I saw him frequently, I think the last time I saw him was the following summer when we were all on our way to Bedford. When we reached Gordonsville he entered the train from Washington, and took a seat in the front of the car; we were in the rear. He asked the newsboy for a Richmond paper; the boy had none. I sent David with the papers to the General. They had a little chat, and he seemed amused, as we were, at David's action.

After eyeing him some time David asked: 'Did you belong to Papa's company?' The old General told him he did. He was therefore a member of the Otey Battery.

V

I was on board the steamship *Abyssynia* bound for Liverpool in September 1874. I was next to the captain at table. He told me there was a lord on board and at his table, and suggested

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that we should both guess which one at the table was the man. I designated the man I thought, for I had never seen a live lord, and he another. He asked me why I named that man. I told him because I sat opposite him at breakfast and he had Virginia cantaloupe and drank French brandy, and I thought lords might do that way.

A day or so afterwards I was surprised when the man I had designated as a lord asked me if I was not from Virginia, and introduced himself as Alexander Collis, saying, as I remember so well, 'Dear old Virginia. Dear old Richmond.' I remember saying to myself, 'Alexander Collis! Alexander Collis! The great blockade runner of the Confederacy!'

I had $10,000 invested in one of his ventures. We became acquainted and saw much of each other. I said nothing to him about blockade running, but he told me he had just secured $1,000,000 from the United States for cotton seized after the war and it cost him nearly half of it to gain his suits. He was a most interesting man; had traveled all over the world, a good conversationalist, a cultivated gentleman. One night on deck, surrounded by a group of ladies and gentlemen, he told us of the adventures of a friend and neighbor of his named Shelley, a nephew of the party living on the adjoining place in Scotland, which were so remarkable — as he said, he was then having them published in book form — that I went to my stateroom and made a synopsis of the story.

On arriving in England and mentioning to Norman that I had crossed with Alexander Collis, he told me I had crossed with a grand rascal, and I would never get any of that $1,000,000. He said when in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he had gone to purchase a cargo of meat for the Confederacy, he bought from the son of a commercial agent of the Confederate States. He swindled him out of $6000 by giving forged bills of lading. He went back to Bermuda, but of course the meat never arrived.

Time went along, but not a very long time, when, looking over the *Despatch* one morning, I saw a cable from London saying that Alexander Collis & Company had failed for a tremendous amount — I think from one and one-half million to two million dollars — and that a reward of two thousand pounds sterling was offered for the capture of Alexander. Time again went along, and this time a little more rapidly, and one evening in my walk home, by way of Broad Street, in front of the St. Clair Hotel I met a man I knew, but could not spot. It worried me until I got above Murphy's Hotel, and it flashed across me that it was Alexander Collis. I went back and looked up and down the street.

Several days after, I saw the same man go into Maury's office, just across the street from mine. I had a vision of getting my two thousand pounds investment liquidated by the two thousand pounds reward. Though he was six feet tall and I a little fellow, I waited at the door. As he passed out, I passed in. 'Who is that man?' I asked Mr. Maury. 'Oh, he is just some Englishman, to get his English money changed to currency.' 'It is Alexander Collis,' I said. 'Oh, no, it is not. He brought us letters; his name is McNeil.' 'Are you sure?' 'Why, yes, he is all right,' and all right he remained for eight years. He was a toast at the Westmoreland Club, pulled the wires for Parsons and Blaine and Beast Butler to work the Alleghany Railroad scheme, built the hotels at the Natural Bridge and at Dover, and in the summer lived in luxury at Grant Peterkin's place 'Beauregard' near the White Sulphur.

He had projected a city just below Manchester, between that place

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and Whitley. On driving with my friend Ad Williams, who then owned Whitley, he showed me the stobs placed by the surveyor. For some reason he departed. A prominent lawyer, John Dunlap, a personal friend of his, and also of mine, asked me if I knew McNeil. I did not. 'Do you know Alexander Collis?' 'I have met him.' 'Do you think McNeil is Alexander Collis?' 'I think McNeil looks exactly like Collis, but you are a lawyer; mistaken identity sometimes leads to trouble and I don't know McNeil.'

A few days afterwards I was traveling to Washington, and when we reached Milford the train from Washington passed us. A friend, a real-estate man named Poindexter, sitting behind me said he wished he was on that train, that old 'Mac' was on it. 'Do you know old Mac?' 'Who is old Mac?' 'Why, McNeil.' 'No, I don't know him.' Tom Stratton, the conductor, an old Otey Battery boy, said, 'Don't they say he is somebody else — Collis, or some such name?' 'Oh, no,' said Poindexter, 'he is my intimate friend, and he is all right.'

I remarked that I did not know McNeil, but I did Collis, and he was the most interesting of men; on a voyage across the ocean I talked with him. He gave us the adventures of a friend of his named Shelley which were the most remarkable I ever heard. Poindexter wanted to know if I remembered any of them. I scratched my memory and related one. He asked for another, and as I ended it he slapped me on the shoulder and said, 'By George! I have heard old Mac tell those same stories about himself.' I told him I was telling what Collis told me; I did not know old Mac.

In less than a week the lawyer and real-estate man told me that Robert McNeil was Alexander Collis. He had lived eight or ten years in Richmond undiscovered, meeting eight or ten people who knew him in London and had business with him. Leaving Richmond, he died a pauper about 1897 or 1898 on Staten Island, New York.

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THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

Abimelech the Sailor

When I was a young lad
And thought I'd live forever,
I knew an ancient sailorman —
His face was brown as leather.

He'd take a puff, then wave his pipe,
His head held slanty-wise;
He called himself Abimelech —
He told the grandest lies!

(*Like this one*)
'My grandsire were a Pirate
And did 'ee know that, lad?
The bravest of all pirates . . .
More brave were he than bad! . . .

'His crew were swarthy villyuns
With teeth a dazzling white;
And when they smiled 't was daytime
But when they frowned 't was night.

'His ship wore emeralds and rubies
For port and starboard lights
And beaten gold from India
As bitts for cable bights.

'They'd scuttled three rich galleons
Bound east from high Peru,
And just as the last man walked the plank
Two frigates hove in view.

'Then swift she fled before the wind
Seeking the ancient fort
That overlooked the hidden bay
Of their secret Pirate Port —

'When roaring up like thunder,
Due east from Port-o'-Spain,
It struck her full amidships —
An Indies hurricane!

'It swept her clear of rigging,
And with her splintered stumps
Three days she wallowed in the trough
With all hands at the pumps.

'One by one the fever seized
While day by day she drifted
With not a sail and not a sound
But groans and prayers uplifted!'

Abimelech the Sailor
Relit his pipe and puffed;
He rose and stretched and then he says:
'Well, lad, the wind has luffed!'

But I with eyes still staring wide,
And mouth still wide agape,
Question him with bated breath:
'How did they all escape?'

'My grandsire, he as told the yarn —
And he were full of tales —
Said nigh as he could recollect
They was towed ashore by *whales!*'

Douglas Cary Wendell

Oceans of Lotion

I once knew a woman who relieved the tedium of dishwashing by memorizing long stretches out of Racine or Molière. Glancing up now and then at the book perched above the sink, she would declaim such sonorous Alexandrines as these: —

Votre sexe n'est là que pour la dépendance;
Du côté de la barbe est la toute-puissance.

All-power of the bearded ones, indeed! Why, even her selection of such a passage indicated an inappropriate humility. Had she never heard that she was the purchaser of four fifths of the world's goods? I am not so modest. A sort of silent adviser to the Big Business Man, I compose letters which I never get around to writing.

'Dear Sir,' I say, chasing a fugitive scrap of oatmeal around the bottom of a pan with a copper-mesh ball about as big and as flexible as a grapefruit, 'In your laudable desire to improve your Kitchen Bright Ball, I think you have forgotten that the function of a scouring pad is to get into corners.'

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I picture the Great Man in his glittering executive offices. Remote, gray-haired, and kindly, he does not think me negligible; he wants me to be happy about my scouring pads. When he assumes, somewhat fallaciously, that because I like his Kitchen Bright Ball I might like it bigger, he should be told differently. He needs someone with the homely domestic touch — someone like me, in short — to write him letters.

Sometimes I even take a hand in more public affairs. In my correspondence there is some pretty sage advice to the manager of my favorite department store. Leaving others to make obvious complaints about seams that split, I urge him to see to it that children's letter paper is made large enough for them to write on. And why, when children's noses are so regrettably active, should their handkerchiefs be so very small? Portraits of Mickey Mouse on one's handkerchief, however engaging (I shall tell him), never really compensate for inadequate yardage.

And I have plenty to say on the subject of moving stairways. 'Dear Sir,' that one will begin, 'I view with alarm your plan to supplant your main bank of elevators with escalators.'

He may wonder why I prefer one form of mechanism to another. I think that it is the potentialities, not of danger, but of ignominy, that I have always suspected. My children, who are devoted to the escalators, may ride them freely — as long as I need not go along. On our rare shopping trips together it is my practice, before I dart to the elevators to join them on another floor, to kiss the children good-bye and wave them off on their little excursion. Watching thus, I have seen some curious sights. As one given to dropping keys and handbags, I do well to keep off the moving stairways. I cannot forget the agitated girl struggling to retrieve a five-dollar bill before it got mashed at the bottom; or the gentleman whose umbrella caught and got wedged upright. They stopped the machinery that time, but before they could extricate the umbrella the embarrassed gentleman had fled. I dare say he rides the elevators now, like me.

It is in the kitchen, however, that I have the largest opportunities for my stillborn correspondence. You might think my Big Executive's wife would point out a few obvious facts to him. I suppose she seldom gets out to the kitchen, except to toss up a dish of scrambled eggs on Thursday; and her cook, poor patient creature, is even less articulate than I.

Yet, without my intervention, reform sometimes penetrates the kitchen. One manufacturer, divining my silent apostrophe, finally got around to putting up his vanilla in squatty, non-tippable bottles. I wish I could report that his brand now outsells all others.

I like to make up letters to the people who put recipes on packages. Whenever I want to make a cornstarch pudding — the intervals are long, for I am not very fond of what our English cousins call 'cold shapes' — I try the package recipe first. It seems odd that the cornstarch merchant should suggest an insufficient amount of cornstarch. I rebuke him pretty severely. It is the conclusion of that letter that I am fondest of; it should give him pause. 'Dear Sir,' I say, 'In our family we have decided that fresh fruits and cheese make a *much* more sophisticated dessert.'

I address warm letters of appreciation to the manufacturer of pots and pans. It is jolly of him to streamline my cooking utensils; but how about guaranteeing a saucepan that will not tip over with a little pressure on the handle? And how about making me a wide, shallow baking pan with a cover to fit, so that I can have lots of surface for browning when the top is off? I am tired of trying to make a cookie sheet do for a cover. And speaking of lids — I hope I am decently grateful to all the designers who have enlivened grocery packages with ingenious pouring spouts and sifters. But while you are about your improvements, dear Sir, may we not have an end to those unpleasant little oval caps which, turned sideways, are always falling in and being drowned in cocoa and baking powder?

I am never severe for long with my Big Business Man. I know that, for all his concern with my kitchen conveniences, he still thinks of me as a Lovely Lady. He wants me to be alluring. He wants me to keep, in addition to the bottle of hand lotion in the bathroom, another one on the kitchen shelf. And so I will, if he does n't make it too hard to get at the stuff. There are bottles that fasten on the wall, bottles with patent

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plunger caps, and bottles with openings as small as the eye of a needle — all calculated to release not more than two drops at a time.

'Dear Sir: I don't know what you are thinking of with your two drops of lotion. You had better read what Rosalind said to Silvius about Phebe. Rather catty of her, too, to drop ideas like that into his head, when he was going to have to put up with his rustic love for the rest of their lives.

'. . . She has a leathern hand,
A freestone-colored hand; I verily did think
That her old gloves were on, but 't was her hands;
She has a housewife's hand.

'Why, if Shakespeare was right, dear Sir, we'll take Oceans of Lotion. And there's a slogan for you.'

Portrait of a Good Provider

'Mr. Bailey,' my grandfather's housekeeper used to say, 'is a very particular man, but a good provider.'

We children did n't know exactly what the phrase meant, though we connected it with his starting out in the morning, erect and well brushed, a large market basket on his arm, prepared to bring back in person that part of the day's eating not produced by the garden or the chicken house. We did n't guess that Grandfather with the market basket represented an ancient philosophy of living. To us it was just part of summer in the country, where things were different.

We did n't even think of Grandfather as old, though he must have been seventy-five. He was small and straight, and stepped out briskly, using his walking stick only to fend off inquiring dogs. Aunt Lucinda, his elder sister, was really old — a tiny, bent figure with bright, beady eyes blinking at us over the top of her cane. Finished with a tall, pointed cap, she could have impersonated one of the cantankerous old fairies in Grimm's. She had been a school-teacher for forty-five years before coming to live with Grandfather, Mother told us. Privately, I resolved never to have anything to do with the profession.

Well, Grandfather provided for her, too, as he had for many others in his life — his sisters in their youth, his father and mother in their old age, my own mother, and her mother. All in their turn had had shelter in that comfortable house in which my grandfather reigned as benevolent despot.

Kind though he was, Mr. Bailey definitely ruled his household. I see him bent over his desk, busy with microscope and acid, testing the quality of samples for sheets, or blankets, or tablecloths, which he, the master, would buy, and the available womenfolk would hem. I see him standing squirming in front of the long mirror, finding fault with the fit of shirts made to his order. I see him bringing in the garden truck, all carefully washed, and announcing briefly that we would have beans to-day and squash to-morrow; or suddenly appearing in the pantry and laying down the law because the housekeeper did not hang the cooking spoons exactly in their appointed order.

Then there was the summer-long contest between him and my mother on the subject of raspberries. Mother loved raspberries, and Grandfather did not. Each morning Mother would say hopefully, 'How about some raspberries for lunch?' But each day, when the market basket was unpacked, there would be strawberries, or blueberries, or pears, but never raspberries. He did not refuse outright, but somehow he could never find any raspberries worth buying.

Why, I wonder, did my mother stand for it? Why did n't she walk downtown and buy herself a box of raspberries? I don't know. I only know that she never did. She, so much the mistress of her own home, slipped back into this older patriarchal existence without a struggle. Perhaps she found it restful, for, after all, Mr. Bailey was a good provider.

Grandfather was not one of those hearty New Englanders who had beefsteak for breakfast, topped off with pie twice a day. On the contrary, although he ordered the cooking and serving precisely, he was very abstemious. He demanded in his providing an element of artistic satisfaction. For instance, he would never permit a cup with a chipped edge to be brought to the table. If one did get there by mistake, Grandfather would seize the offending bit of crockery, take it out to the chicken yard, and hurl it violently against the barn. 'There,' he would say, as it broke into a hundred pieces, 'that will never plague me again.'

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I was with him the day that he first encountered a morris chair in the local furniture store. He stared, pointing at it with his cane, and demanded of the clerk what it might be. All attention, the clerk told him, adding that it was a recent importation from New York. Grandfather eyed the novelty with furrowed brows. 'Great, gorming thing,' he announced, and removed himself rapidly from its vicinity.

Then there was Grandfather's pet rosebush, the Duke of Edinburgh, especially beloved because it alone, of all the old-fashioned roses, flowered throughout the summer. There were never more than one or two buds at a time, but each was cherished tenderly. When a blossom reached perfection, Grandfather would cut it, place it in a small vase, and set it on the mantelpiece. Then he would stand back and say, 'There, I call that handsome.' No one but Grandfather ever cut a blossom from the Duke of Edinburgh.

There was little fastidiousness in my great-aunt, and its lack must have been a daily penance to Grandfather. When her tea or coffee was too hot, Aunt Lucinda would pour some out into her saucer to cool, country-fashion. Or she would demand doughnuts and cheese with any meal that was served. Grandfather would say pointedly, 'There are rolls and bread on the table, Lucinda.' With black eyes snapping, she would retort, 'Doughnuts were good fifty years ago, Bradbury, and they are good to-day.' Sometimes, too, he would quarrel with her diction, for, although she had been the school-teacher, he was the more precise in speech. Rolling a warning eye at us children, he would rebuke our city slang, ending, 'The best of English is none too good.'

With us grandchildren he arranged a happy compromise. At least, we were happy in it. He provided playrooms for us over the woodshed and the summer kitchen, with simple gymnastic apparatus on which he would demonstrate his own neat skill. I remember that he could still chin himself at eighty. Gymnastics, however, were for weekdays. Sundays were different. Liberal as was his theology, Grandfather enjoined a decorous Sabbath.

On one point he relaxed. That was the ice cream for Sunday dinner. This was made, by hand as it were, down cellar, for no freezer was permitted to drip within my grandfather's kitchen. But the housekeeper would not descend to the depths, and the Irish maid always let salt get in. So we children were excused from church before the sermon, to dash home and turn the crank of the ice-cream freezer. My brother would break the ice, and mix it with salt. The housekeeper would hand us the container, filled with dilute cream and chopped fruit, tightly covered. Then, turn and turn about, one small girl would sit on the freezer, to hold it steady, while the other would turn the crank till her arms tired.

Then, upstairs for Sunday dinner, with Grandfather in black broadcloth and very white linen, Aunt Lucinda in black silk and her best white organdie cap, hand-embroidered. At that meal not even Aunt Lucinda dared ask for her doughnut, though its loss was compensated for by a private dish of pickles. 'I relish a little acid with my food,' Aunt Lucinda would say defiantly, for she knew that Grandfather did not approve of pickles with a Sunday dinner, with ice cream to follow.

The feast over, my mother and the housekeeper would tactfully retire upstairs, 'to write letters.' Grandfather would then seat himself in his straight-backed armchair, upholstered in black horsehair. Aunt Lucinda would be seated opposite in hers. All would be furnished with some approved reading. Heads were bowed over books. That pleasant torpor induced by summer warmth and well-filled stomachs would descend upon us. We children struggled valiantly, watching our elders. Gradually Aunt Lucinda's tight lips would part, and her chin hang loose. Grandfather's fly swatter would swing less briskly. His head would fall jerkily, till finally a fly would light, unheeded, on his white curls. That was our signal. Clasping our Sunday books to us, more silent than the Arabs, we would slip away to our playroom.

Chickaree and the Vandals

I was cutting firewood in the primeval Douglas fir forest when he first appeared. Clearly he had come to investigate the source of the racket made by the gasoline-driven saw.

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As the engine sputtered, choked, coughed, and then clattered on, Chickaree edged nearer and nearer, slipping first behind one can and then another on the flat surface of a six-foot stump. He was now so close that when he stuck his head up over a can of hard grease I saw his whiskers move inquiringly on either side of his blunt nose. Without warning, the engine backfired with a series of explosions like small artillery. At the first bang, Chickaree (red or pine squirrel we call him on the Atlantic Coast) fled with a flip of his fluent tail, and we saw him no more that day.

The truck on which we had moved the heavy dragsaw stood a few rods away on a road just swamped through the timber, and in it were some Sweet Boughs, brought along to stave off the chronic hunger of the stout Norwegian youth who was helping me. Not wishing to carry the uneaten apples back home, I hid them at the butt of a second-growth fir, covering them with the leaves of a near-by sword fern that rose clean and untrammeled.

When we returned to the woods the next morning I caught Chickaree in the act of finishing the last apple. He was sitting on top of the broken-down sword fern, deftly peeling the thin yellow skin from a chunk of fruit the size of a hen's egg. At my approach he slipped behind the fir trunk, still holding the piece of apple in his formidable yellow teeth, peered cautiously round at me, and then vanished in the brush.

On this occasion I had brought down a box filled with Sweet Boughs, and placed it on top of a stump beside the truck. Before night the young Norwegian had eaten most of the apples. Forgetting the squirrel, at the end of the day I left behind the half dozen that remained in the box. When I returned the next morning I found that his lordship had eaten part of the largest and mellowest one, and generously sampled another.

The Norwegian, resenting the theft of his mid-morning lunch, carried the box up to the stump on which we kept the cans and tools. Shortly before noon, as I stood easing the saw through a pitchy knot, I saw Chickaree approaching in a series of graceful loups over the great blocks of sawn timber left behind as we moved down the log. He came on as if bound for nowhere in particular — just fooling about to pass the time.

Pausing on the edge of a block that had been tilted above its fellows, he stuck up his small ears, which seemed too close together for the lower part of his substantial head, and for a time watched with the still regard characteristic of wild things the contraption that provoked so much sound and fury; then he sauntered leisurely over to the box of apples. The ruse was so obvious, so suggestive of the transparent deceptions practised by all of us, that I stood and laughed until the little fellow paused and eyed me for all the world as if he suspected that I had 'caught on.'

But Chickaree's love of apples had not run away with a caution older than the first Sweet Bough, older even than the giant firs about him. The box was some eight inches deep, and, standing as it did within a rod of us, he dared not venture into it, as he would have been at our mercy if we chose to creep up on him. Twice he slid in sideways, keeping one eye on us to the last moment, but sprang out again with an alacrity that I suspect only a weasel could equal. For a time he sat on the edge of the box motionless, apparently weighing the pros and cons of the situation; then he dropped soundlessly down and circled a few times about the treasure he had so set his heart upon, as if, like a lover, he found a subtle gratification in mere propinquity.

In one end of the box I had cut a hole for the insertion of my hand when I used it as a milking stool, and through this Chickaree slipped, carefully drawing his tail in behind him. Apparently he thought that by entering the box in this surreptitious way he could keep the vandals at the saw from knowing he was there.

After a few minutes of hiding, he cautiously emerged with an apple that must have weighed more than he did. Grasping it in his human-like hands, he sank his teeth deep into the side, shook it to be sure he had a good hold, and then made for the trunk of a second-growth fir. Tipping his head back until the apple projected well out over his now straight back, he started up the trunk of the tree at a brisk clip, moving with a steadiness and smoothness quite unlike the red squirrel's usual jerky motion. It looked as if the serious nature of the

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business in hand made him dispense with all the superfluous fancy gestures common to his kind. That he could even lift the apple surprised me; his present feat seemed nothing short of prodigious. Swiftly but surely, up and up he went, his sinuous tail hugging the rough bark as if he were using it for a prop.

At the height of about fifteen feet he came to a slender branch, green at the tip, but bristling on either side with dead, moss-encrusted twigs. Still holding the apple, he started out along its smooth upper surface. But climbing straight up the side of the tree with the apple directly above his head, and under him the rough-ridged bark in which to hook his needle-like claws, proved a much easier task than carrying his treasure along a horizontal branch less than two inches through. At times the apple wabbled dangerously, and the game little fellow had to work with a dexterity that really put him on his mettle.

'The thief,' as the Norwegian youth branded him, had proceeded about eight feet in this hazardous fashion before I perceived what he had in mind. Reaching a place where a couple of dead twigs had grown close to each other, he carefully deposited the apple so that it rested between them and against the branch. He let go of his prize with caution, then nudged it gently with his nose, just to try it out. Turning round, he looked down at us with an air of triumph laughable to see.

But one Sweet Bough was not enough to rescue from the noisy vandals who had so ruthlessly invaded his quiet retreat. Darting down the trunk, he reëntered the box and emerged with an exceptionally large apple, the one from which he had already eaten the red side when it was back on the other stump. Even the remaining half must have weighed quite as much as the first Sweet Bough, and, owing to its irregular shape, he had added difficulties in balancing it above his head.

When about twelve feet from the ground the soft pulp began to give way under the pressure of his teeth, and he performed the seemingly impossible feat of securing a new hold without touching the apple with his paws, deftly balancing the awkward thing on the tip of his nose until, with a lightning-like jab, he once more sank his teeth into it. This time they held, and on up he went, a good twelve feet above the first treasure-trove, as if in the second venture he were taking no chances on the possible agility of the strange creatures over by the log.

At this height there were a number of branches to choose from. Selecting the sturdiest of them, he made his way out to a spot at which it forked; in the V-shaped opening he placed the apple, the gnawed side up, rocked it gently a couple of times with his right paw, and then started back down the tree.

This time, however, he did not stop to taunt us. Hastening away over the sawn blocks, he disappeared into an undergrowth of hazel bushes, from which, earlier in the season, he doubtless had gathered a generous supply of nuts and stored them in some near-by hollow trunk beyond the reach of the boldest marauder, furred or feathered, that might come that way.

Throughout this fascinating little drama I found it hard to restrain the young Norwegian from seizing the two remaining apples and carrying them to a place of safety. The squirrel gone, he brought them to the log we were sawing and placed them within easy reach. He had stepped round to oil the driving shaft when I spied Chickaree's head rising unobtrusively above the edge of a block; the next moment there was a blurred streak of red, the flash of an orange belly, and one of the two apples was gone.

The Norwegian turned in time to see Chickaree scurrying down the log, but was too slow to overtake the brazen thief with the chunk of bark hurled after him. Out of immediate danger, the squirrel leapt across to the trunk of a broad-leaved maple, scrambled up nearly to the top with his booty, and, after placing it securely between branching twigs, proceeded to taunt the youth in squirrel language that sounded highly abusive, if not downright scurrilous.

The Norwegian eyed his vilifier solemnly and uttered a parting malediction scarcely printable as he took up the sole remaining apple, sank his fine white teeth into it, and between bites expressed in no uncertain terms his opinion of thieves in general, and of one in particular.

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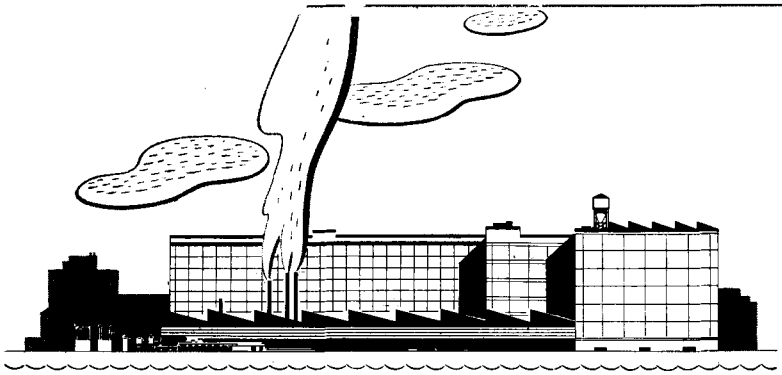

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The first few aluminum cooking utensils were made in a corner of our mill, back in the 90's, to demonstrate to one of the successful manufacturers of iron utensils that this "new" metal could be wrought into a lighter and better product. Women liked the new, light, silvery metal; the seeds of a new industry were sown.

Today many thousands of people gain their livelihood in the forty odd companies which compose the aluminum cooking utensil industry. Millions of America homes use the excellent utensils made by these othe companies and benefit three times a day from the fa that aluminum is friendly to food.

Similarly and unavoidably we began the manufacture of other forms of aluminum, such as sheet tubes, and wire; electrical conductors, bottle caps, chairs, and many others. Of necessity we undertook risks which we could not expect others to take, in order to find new fields of usefulness for the aluminum w were producing.

Often when the rightness of aluminum had thus bee demonstrated, other manufacturers entered these field attracted to a new market in which the education ha been begun and demand had been stimulated. The constructive competition has in turn greatly contribute to the broadening of aluminum markets.

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Products without wheels need proving grounds, too

ALUMINUM COMPANY OF AMERICA

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The CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

It is seldom that **An American** (p. 513) has the opportunity or the knowledge to make so statesmanlike a summary of international conditions as that which occupies the leading pages in this issue. An expert in the fields of finance and government, the writer, who must remain anonymous, has now returned to Washington after months of close and penetrating observation in the other capitals of the world.

Philosopher and journalist, liberal and crusader (when these tags had a meaning), **Lincoln Steffens** (p. 525) died on August 9, 1936. His trenchant and masculine *Autobiography* will tell future generations what he and we were like.

The Seven Lively Arts mean much to **Gilbert Seldes** (p. 531), and so it is with mingled emotions that he regards the approach of Television. Mr. Seldes is the author of fourteen books, the latest of which, *Mainland*, is a somewhat reassuring survey of the life within our boundaries.

Born in Edinburgh in 1875, **William Outerson** (p. 542) ran away to sea when he was fourteen. But it was while serving in the Black Watch in the war that he received his Captain's commission. A firm believer in the adventurous life, he has practised law in Edinburgh, sailed a four-masted bark around the Horn, globe-trotted through Alaska and the Orient, served an enlistment in the United States Navy during the Spanish War — and now, to cap the climax, he lives in Hollywood.

Elizabeth Morrow (p. 551), poet in her own right, is also the mother of Anne Lindbergh. She contributed three poems to the *Atlantic* for April 1934.

A twentieth-century Gulliver, **Albert Jay Nock** (p. 552), for the fun of the thing, holds up the map of Haiti against that of the United States.

Loyal readers of the *Atlantic* will remember **Mary Antin** (p. 560) without being told. Brought up within the Jewish pale of a Russian city, she came to this country from a mediæval background, and while still in her twenties she contributed to the magazine the story of her struggle to grasp the opportunities which America then offered to every immigrant. Her book, *The Promised Land*, is one which still glows in the memory.

Frederick Winsor (p. 570), the Headmaster of the Middlesex School, has something pertinent to say to those teachers and parents who know that they have an exceptional youngster on their hands.

Greenville, Mississippi, is the headquarters of **David L. Cohn** (p. 579), and there at first hand he has contended with the pros and cons of share-cropping. As a Southerner, Mr. Cohn also holds very determined views about the tariff — views well expressed in his book, *Picking America's Pockets*.

Nature writer and essayist in direct descent from Gilbert White and Richard Jefferies, **Henry Williamson** (p. 589) has made illuminating contributions to our understanding of the land and its creatures. His novel, *Tarka the Otter*, was awarded the Hawthornden Prize in 1930, and of his more recent book, *Salar the Salmon* (chapters of which first appeared in the *Atlantic*), Lewis Gannett the critic had this to say: 'Of all English books of the year 1936, my warmest thanks to Henry Williamson for *Salar the Salmon*, which I think will be remembered when the year's best-selling, well-tailored English fiction is all forgotten.'

Gail Hawes (p. 594), who lives on Long Island, appended this footnote to her manuscript: 'In the household about which I have written in "Spring and Mr. Barnum" the *Atlantic Monthly* was the only adult magazine subscribed for. I shall never forget the anguish and dismay we experienced when a sick book agent, taken in for the night by my hospitable mother, left at dawn without a good-bye, and with the new and unread *Atlantic Monthly!* It was an irreparable loss, because, you see, my father could not afford to buy another copy.' After such a friendly bribe, how could we refuse her first offering?

In view of the coming Exposition, **Stephen Leacock** (p. 597), Professor Emeritus of Economics at McGill University, wishes to make sure that we have a literal understanding of the French.

Sumner H. Slichter (p. 600) divides his time between the Institute of Economics in Washington and the Graduate School of Business Administration at Harvard. He is the author of *Modern Economic Society* and a well-respected professor of Business Economics.

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The COLUMN

R. S. (p. 608) is a Boston poet who prefers to conceal his identity between the lines.

North Africa is home to **Mrs. Alice Berry-Hart** (p. 610), who, with her household, lives on the jump from Carthage to Scotland, and return.

A humanist with no particular chip on his shoulder, **Lord Eustace Percy** (p. 618), who was President of the Board of Education from 1924 to 1929, goes far to explain the passive but not unresistant policy of England.

A battery commander in the Army of the Confederacy, **Major David N. Walker** (p. 626) left behind him reminiscences of what it felt like to be Reconstructed.

* * *

Our mention of the schoolgirl who traveled with the *Atlantic* as her chaperon (and inside the orange covers a copy of *True Confessions*) touched off an amusing and rapid succession of stories, cartoons, sketches, and jokes at our expense. Several, of course, submitted the drawing which appeared in the *New Yorker* of January 23 and which paid handsome tribute to our Rejection Slip. For each story or drawing accepted for our collection we will pay a dollar. But not for duplicates. To the reader sending in the largest assortment we will award a five-year subscription to the *Atlantic*. We hope, eventually, to share some of the brighter gems with readers.

* * *

Shortly after the war, all London was flocking to the Albert Hall for Lowell Thomas's illustrated lectures on Lawrence of Arabia. Concerning Eric Kennington's portrait of Lawrence, in the April *Atlantic*, Mr. Thomas writes:—

Dear Atlantic, —

Many thanks for the Eric Kennington article. It is superb. Yes, my Albert Hall experience now seems as though it had occurred in some past incarnation.

Every time I think about Lawrence I hold my head and moan over my lost opportunities. What a chance I had!

It is quite evident that Lawrence was an exceedingly complex personality. He handled some of his friends in a way that has caused them to look upon me as his arch enemy. Little do they know how intimately he was associated with what I did, the numerous times he came to hear me tell about him in London, and the way he worked with me on my book.

At any rate, I broke the story to the world, a story which his own countrymen had totally disregarded.

Eric Kennington's pictures are glorious, and his article is one of the most interesting word pictures of Lawrence that I have ever seen.

LOWELL THOMAS
Rockefeller Center, New York City

The report of the American Foundation Studies in Government on the subject of medical care, which was summarized by Esther Everett Lape in the April *Atlantic* ('The Health of the Nation'), has aroused considerable controversy in the ranks of the medical profession. The editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* has this to say:—

Dear Atlantic, —

If there is one factor that comes out more obviously from this report than any other, it is the unlikelihood that sickness insurance, either voluntary or compulsory, will answer the problem of medical care suitably for the people of the United States. The outlook would seem to be best for a gradual improvement in medical care by the evolution that has been going on for some time. The extension of preventive medicine, increased funds for preventive medicine, and the improvement of medical knowledge are bound to affect the extent, the severity, and the character of illness in coming years. Any fixed plan that failed to take the certainty of these advances into account would involve organization and expenditure far beyond the actual needs of the future.

From ancient Greeks and Romans, through the statesmen of the Middle Ages, down to modern times, the greatest leaders have stated that the care of the public health should be the first interest of the state. Can it be that American statesmen of to-day fail to appreciate the essential truth of this governmental aphorism, evolved from thousands of years of human experience? The mere fact that the present budget of our government for preventive medicine and public health cannot compare favorably with the amount of money spent on the dole has been offered as one reason for keeping public health in a subservient position. Perhaps the proportions that now exist may some day be reversed — a time may come when the nation will spend $4,000,000,000 a year on preventive medicine and $100,000,000 on unemployment and the dole. It will no doubt then be a far happier nation.

MORRIS FISHBEIN, M.D.

'I could not be happy in a steel cage.'

Dear Atlantic, —

Et tu, Brute! I had always thought of you as the last stronghold of individualism, and now comes 'The Modern House' in your March issue! Though endorsing much of it, I cannot, with its young author, altogether swallow modernism, standardization, and the implications of 'the machine age.'

His picture of the many specialists contributing to the development of the housing which is to replace our slums is thrilling. Of this I speak with feeling, having lost much sleep coddling two housing projects in the family. Ours had all the contagious ailments which went the rounds in Mr. Ickes's Nursing Home in the Interior, but did not die, thank Heaven, as so many did. (Incidentally, the infant mortality in that Department was so appalling that it utterly disillusioned me as to the efficacy of Federal Housing. It suffers from too many diseases attributable to location and political climate.)

But my divergence from Mr. Coolidge begins when I see the standardization which is so necessary in

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The COLUMN

low-cost housing stamping itself as a modern style upon all houses — whether one likes it or not. I, for one, *don't* like it! I like its simplifications and its designing in mass, not façades; but I do not want a 'period' house which is stylistic, and that's what I think the modernistic house is — a style set by certain European architects, inspired perhaps by Frank Lloyd Wright, whose *work* I find neither functional nor logical.

Nor do I want to live in a house whose form had its 'origin in the solution of the problems of the factory, the grain elevator, and the skyscraper.' I could not be happy in a 'steel cage with a skin coating of synthetic screens.' I do not want to be regimented or treated as a 'patient' and have a committee or a federal bureau prescribe what kind of house I shall live in.

And last, but not least, I don't want to break completely with the past, but rather to evolve intelligently out of the past.

I want my home to express my philosophy of life — perverse though that may be — and form a fitting background for the furniture I choose to live with (which was not designed for hippopotami). Only thus will it function as *my* house; and a building which does not express its function is — as the Modernists will admit — 'tripe.'

MARIAN GREENE BARNEY
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Step forward, all you home owners!

Dear Atlantic, —

'The Gamble of Home Ownership' by Mr. Reeves in the April issue would seem to leave nothing to hang a doubt on. Yet millions of home owners will probably not accept the soundness of his conclusion.

I have owned four homes in thirty-two years. Sold two at a profit, one at a loss, and face a loss if I sell the fourth. Yet, I believe in owning my home and have reasons, of sorts, for doing so.

A house usually averages to rent for about 10 per cent of its value. That is the figure that landlords try to secure as an average over the years. Mr. Reeves gives an example — a $20,000 place renting at $2040 per year.

Therefore, if I rent a house ten years I have paid the price of it and can prove it by a boxful of receipts. But that is all those rent receipts are good for.

Suppose I do sell it for less than I paid for it? I will get something out of it, surely, and that is more than I can out of the receipts.

Based on the same reasoning is my policy to stop charging myself interest on the home investment after ten years. If a bunch of rent receipts will pay no interest, why be unfair to the house and ask it to pay interest in my bookkeeping?

There are pages more to be written in support of home ownership, but they are not necessary in the case of anyone who has ruefully contemplated one hundred and twenty neat monthly rent receipts before he shoved them into the furnace.

L. C. DOLE
East Orange, New Jersey

'The Job Ahead,' as two of our correspondents see it.

Dear Atlantic, —

One of the premises of Marx which I believe is the most fundamental and persistent in the Russian experiment is given by Arthur Kudner in your March issue as, 'The manufacturer who sells an article for anything more than he pays labor for producing it is exploiting labor.' No belief was ever more false and yet more far-reaching in its effects.

Wealth, from which wages can be paid, can only be produced by labor, but the amount of wealth which can be produced by labor alone is exceedingly small. If a man picks wild strawberries with one hand and collects them in the other, he is creating wealth or value. If he uses a pail, not his own, the pail represents borrowed capital, and the owner of the pail is entitled to a share in the profits. Thus the berry picker could not keep the entire amount of money for which he could sell the berries. In general the owners of capital, whether it be private individuals here or the government in the U. S. S. R., deduct a certain amount from the value of labor to pay for the use of capital. If the deduction were not permitted, there would be no inducement to permit the use of capital, and to run the risks of loss which are inevitably involved.

In the early Christian Church a troublesome question was the righteousness of loaning money for interest. It was decided that interest was permissible, but excessive interest was to be condemned as usury. We need to make a similar distinction between reasonable deductions from the profits of labor, as interest on the capital invested in land and machinery, and excessive deductions. But it is difficult to see why excessive charges by the government for the use of its capital and credit are to be preferred to excessive charges by capitalists.

WINSLOW H. HERSCHEL
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Dear Atlantic, —

How wonderfully, yet how simply, Mr. Kudner summarizes the whole relationship of business and the proletarians in his inspired analogy of Mr. Patzel's prowess at porcine enticement!

'You have to convince the hogs you have something for them.' That, he says, is the secret of success.

Let us skip over the unkind observation that the analogy does not exactly flatter the 100,000,000 prospective convincees. It is too apt in its essentials to be spoiled by its unintentional frankness.

Clearly the job ahead of business — calling the great erring mass of voters back to the right way of thinking and voting — *is* closely parallel to Mr. Patzel's task. Clearly, too, success at both endeavors is a matter of appeal — appeal that builds conviction that the dinner pail on the one hand and the trough on the other are indeed full.

We wonder if Mr. Patzel ever tried his dulcet tones over a feeding trough which for four years had stood largely empty. That would be a test worthy of his championship mettle. He should speak to Mr. Hamilton about it — he knows!

But what a lesson there is in the analogy!

LEO A. SCHMIDT
Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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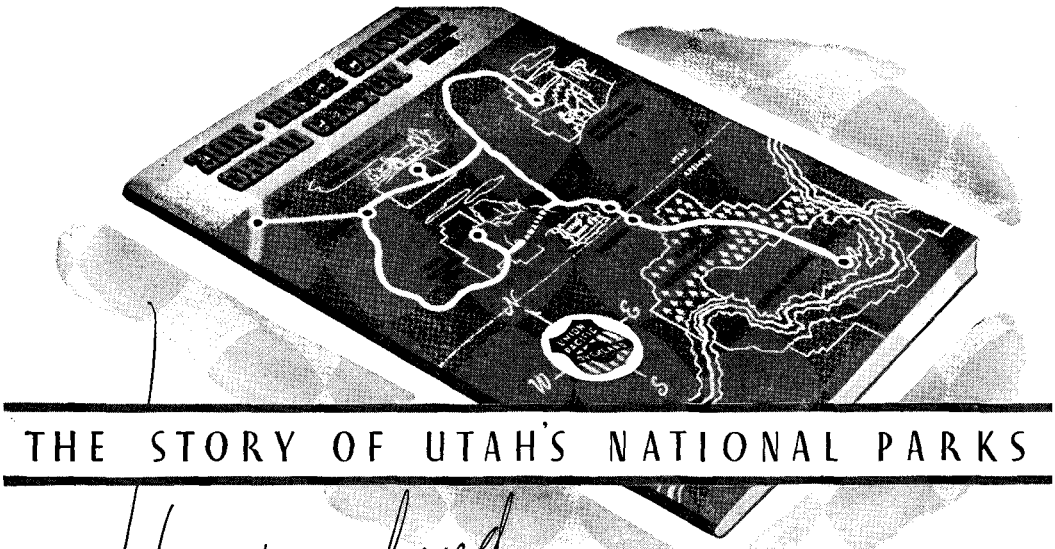

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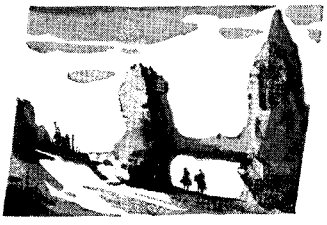

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The COLUMN

Music in the Grand Central Station.

Dear Atlantic, —

Recent notices in the papers of phonograph recordings made by Ralph Kirkpatrick remind me of several delightful experiences (or of a delightful experience several times repeated) I had in New York City last winter. Perhaps the story may be of interest to you.

Last year I was a senior in Yale College. A friend of mine and I used to go frequently to New York to hear concerts and recitals in which we were interested — those of Schnabel and Toscanini at Carnegie Hall, and the Bennington Chamber Orchestra Series at Town Hall. On these occasions we were often joined by our friend Ralph Kirkpatrick, who introduced us to one of the most unusual spots in New York.

One night Ralph hustled us (somewhat to our bewilderment) to the Grand Central Station ten minutes or so before train time, and took us up a short flight of stairs near the entrance to the tracks. There was a blind marble corridor, fifteen or twenty feet wide and several hundred feet long, empty but for two or three charwomen at the far end. Ralph pulled out several pieces of music paper from his pocket, and we noticed that he was more excited than he is in the greenroom about to play the 'Goldberg Variations.'

'Canons,' he said, and started to whistle *allegro moderato ma con brio*. After a rest of a beat and a half the corridor took up the canon at the unison. The ensemble was perfect, the music excellent. Ralph shuffled his manuscripts and began another canon in the minor mode. We forgot our train and the charwomen their work. Never was 'the New Music' so quickly accepted by both the few and the general. A small audience gathered, and listened with scarcely a cough, a whisper, or a vulgar tentative yodel. Ralph exhausted his repertoire and repeated several canons as encores.

'It's all in the tempo,' he said later as we were waiting for the early morning milk train. 'You write a good canon at the unison and ascertain the necessary Maezel's Metronome marking, and that's all there is to it. But it takes a lot of rehearsals. And remember, the form is n't that of the "Echoes" of Purcell and Bach, where one part pauses and the other chimes in with a wisp of the preceding figure; it's a full-fledged two-part canon at the unison for whistle and Grand Central Station.'

Our trips to New York were made the rest of the winter with an added zest, for Ralph always would have several late *opera* in his catalogue, the first performance of which we would hear under the general musical direction of the composer.

If you think that there are among your readers those who have not forgotten their counterpoint, and can compose a strict two-part canon (and strict it must be — here is no shuffling of your crotchets and your minims!), who can whistle, and who at times take the 11.50 or the 12.50 out of Grand Central Station for Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford, and points north, you perhaps would like to print this letter in your columns. It will show such readers the not too circumscribed possibilities of a musical entertainment in which, I believe, Samuel Pepys himself would have participated 'with the greatest ecstasy.'

DAY THORPE
Bethesda, Maryland

Did it *always* have 'the same yellow cover'?

Dear Atlantic, —

I recently spent five years teaching thirty miles inland from Canton, China. I always had my sister forward the *Atlantics* after she had read them. When I was packing to leave for America, my servant, a woman who could neither read nor write, asked me if I intended leaving my book with the yellow cover. She pointed to it on the mantel.

I told her I did intend leaving it for other teachers to read. She shook her head woefully and said, 'I do hope other teachers are smarter than you.'

'Why?' I asked, amused.

'Well, you've been reading that same book with the same yellow cover since I came four years ago, and you've just now finished it.'

GERTRUDE MITCHELL
Portland, Oregon

The letter of rejection in a new guise.

Dear Atlantic, —

Inspired by Richard Sheridan Ames's 'The Art of Pleasing Everybody,' I conceived an idea which might have aided the radio industry in attaining its long-sought goal. Accordingly, I addressed a letter to one of the big broadcasting companies to say that I had such an idea (and its purpose) and would be pleased to explain it, if they were interested.

A prompt reply was received in the following language: —

> Our personnel have considered and discussed practically *every radio broadcasting idea that could be conceived.* It accordingly follows that 99 per cent of the suggestions that are made to us by outside parties are rejected because they are not new with us and have been considered previously.
>
> We do not solicit ideas and prefer that any ideas for radio programmes be submitted only in the form of a *complete* dramatic script *ready for broadcast.* Ideas are not property and are only worth while to the originator if they can be adapted and put in use. Once in use they are in the public domain.
>
> Thank you for writing us in this connection.
>
> *Cordially* yours . . .

I therefore hasten to suggest that you so advise Mr. Ames, and most certainly your subscribers, lest some other misguided individual waste thought or postage on this matter.

Can this be the death-rattle of the New Art?

EDWARD G. BURKE
Newark, New Jersey

'Little brother' to Allen Wood's 'Town Triangle' in the January *Atlantic*.

Dear Atlantic, —

The Triangle into which Mr. Allen Wood lures us for such an interesting and colorful walk has a little

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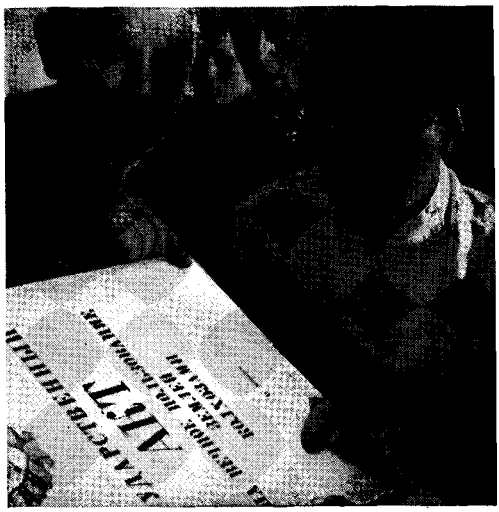

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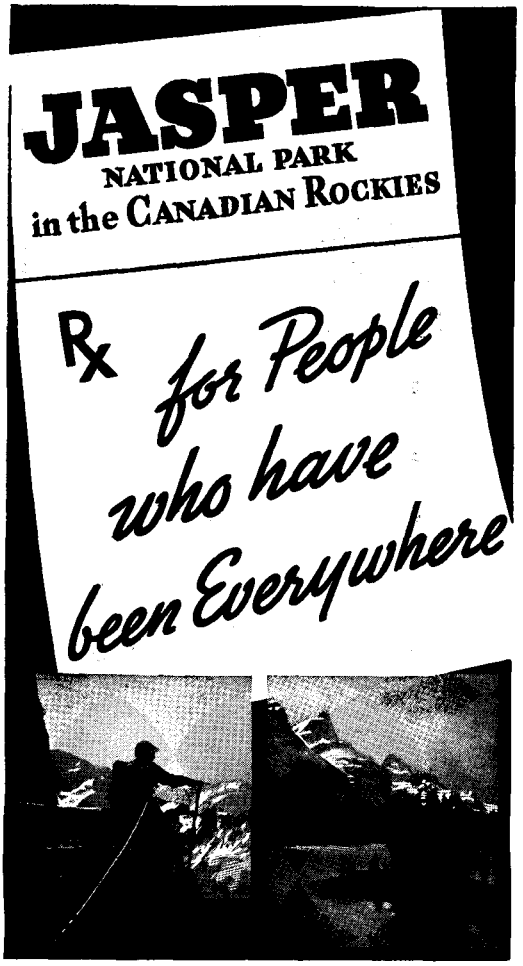

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CANADIAN NATIONAL
To Everywhere in Canada

brother. Our farm in Pennsylvania has a triangular swamp that fits neatly into the farthest corner of the pasture. There is a mad little brook that goes rushing through, throwing off fresh water that finds quiet, deep holes in which to lie and stagnate. Our Triangle waves a tiger lily here and there, although its favorite flag seems to be the military cattail.

To me our swamp is most enticing in the autumn, when its gypsy gown taunts the harvested fields and teases the less brilliant pasture lands around. It was most intimate to me in the early mornings when I used to wade into its deeps with high boots and a big basket to pick the waxy and fresh cowslips while a catbird on a near-by rotting fence serenaded me and an invisible bullfrog croaked hoarsely, keeping me nervous lest I step on him or find him in the clumps of cowslips. One of the swamp's greatest treasures to me has been the nest of large, beautifully speckled eggs that I unearthed among the dried stalks and matted grasses.

Oh, that practical souls would cease draining our swamps for the sake of cultivation and let their wild beauty ramble on in its glorious profusion!

JEAN BARLOW
Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio

And here, in original form, is a contribution by a ninth-grade pupil of Rochester High School, Rochester, Minnesota, to whom Gertrude Stein's 'Butter Will Melt,' in the February issue, was read aloud.

COBINSON RUSOE

ONCE upon a time there lived on a far away island a queer man named Cobinson Rusoe. Now don't misunderstand me. It is n't Robinson Crusoe because this man's name is Cobinson Rusoe. He did not have a servant named Friday because Friday was Robinson's servant not Cobinson's. The entire island belonged to him because he had explored the island and no one else lived on the island so the entire island belonged to him. He could n't remember how he came to this island because he could n't fly or swim and he did not know what a boat was.

This isle was a desolate spot and offered very little amusement but Cobinson always had his five senses and could think of something to do. On Sundays he always lay and bathed in the cool, refreshing water which surrounded the island because an island is n't an island unless it is surrounded by water. Now all water is n't cool and refreshing and this water would n't be cool if it were boiled and if it were n't cool it would n't be refreshing, but this water was cool and refreshing so Cobinson lay and bathed in it.

On Tuesdays when he awoke he was always very hungry so he ate whatever he could find because he had to find the food before he could eat it. It was either bananas or cocoanuts depending upon which was nearer his reach because Cobinson was very lazy and did not like to stretch his limbs very far.

Now on Wednesdays after eating bananas or cocoanuts whichever had been nearer his reach he washed his clothes because it is difficult to prevent spilling when you are eating while reclining. He used sand and the cool, refreshing water because there was no hot spring or stove to furnish hot water and he had never heard of soap and very likely would n't

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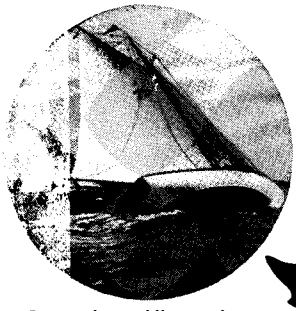

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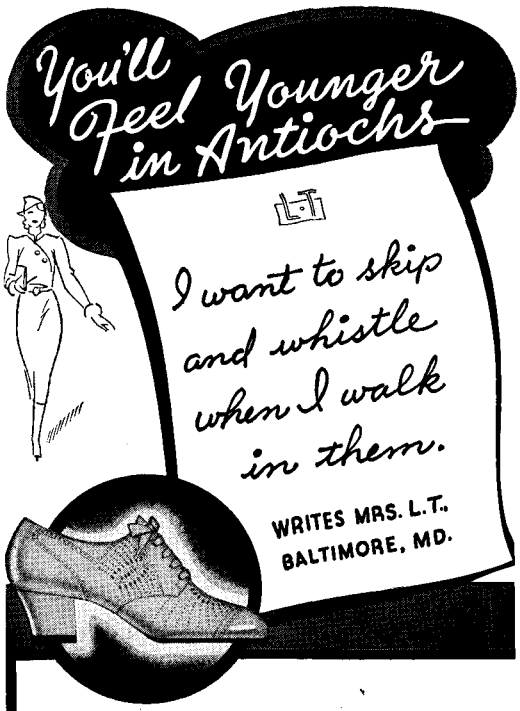

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have known how to use it if he had had the soap but he did n't have the soap to use because you see poor Cobinson had just been dropped on this lonely place.

On Thursdays he rested because he had worked very hard on previous days and needed the rest because he was tired.

Friday was the day set aside to clean his house. Although he did not have a house he called the haven under the largest palm tree his 'house' because that was where he ate and slept. On cleaning day he gathered fresh bananas and cocoanuts and laid dow fresh palm leaves for his bed.

Every Saturday he took a trip to some dista part of the island if the weather was n't too ho But the sun shone on this island very brightly so th weather was often very hot. On many Saturdays th trips had to be postponed. But one Saturday Col inson took a trip because it was not too hot to take a trip and he discovered a large bush covered wit black, luscious berries. He tasted a berry and decided that it was very good so he removed his stockings which he had made out of shirt sleeves because one day it had become too hot to wear the shirt sleeves and he filled the two stockings with the black berries. Cobinson then started for his 'house' with his lovely black berries eating a few as he walked along.

When he reached his destination he sat down and ate the remaining berries which was one full stocking full because he had eaten the contents of the other stocking on his journey home. As Cobinson sat eating the black berries his thoughts were on tomorrow which was his bath day. But Cobinson was not to have another bath for he ate many black berries, and that night he was very sick but he could not call a doctor to give him castor oil because Cobinson was all alone on the island so there was no doctor to call.

No one knew when Cobinson died, not even his parents or friends because he did n't have any parents or friends. No one knows where the island is so no one has ever gone to the island and Cobinson is still all, all alone.

Accompanying two very interesting manuscripts recently sent to the *Atlantic* was the following note which we think worth sharing, particularly with those readers who early acquired 'the *Atlantic* habit.'

Dear Atlantic, —

To be sure your readers know that we in Mississippi do not spend all of our time chasing Negroes with bloodhounds or having Negroes lash them in the cotton fields; although my mother about decided ten or twelve years ago that *you* thought so.

I was just a small child but I remember Dad and Uncle's teasing her because she said that she was going to write to you about an article dealing with a Negro hunt in Mississippi. They said she just wanted to get her name in the *Atlantic*.

She did not write. Her protest took the form of not reading your magazine for months. Finally Dad said, 'It is no fun to read the *Atlantic* if I can't discuss it with you, so I guess I'll just drop my subscription after this year.'

Mother must have done some real hard thinking for she decided that it was narrow not to allow the

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other man to enjoy his opinion; or perhaps it was love for Dad; anyway she began to read the *Atlantic* again and has read it ever since — when she could procure a copy.

No, she does n't subscribe for it now. Since Dad's death she has had the responsibility of trying to educate us two boys, with the result that she has done without many things some of which she not only wanted but needed. I felt that the *Atlantic* was [illegible] the letter [illegible] t year when I was required to [illegible] t the university I saved all my [illegible] took [illegible] home to her. And did she enjoy [illegible]

Pleas[illegible] if this sounds like a little boy's letter to [illegible] and [illegible] found uncle. I am in reality a young man studying at a university, but writing about Dad and Mother and the *Atlantic* carried me back to the [illegible] when they discussed your opinions in such a [illegible] that I thought of you as one of their most in[illegible] friends.

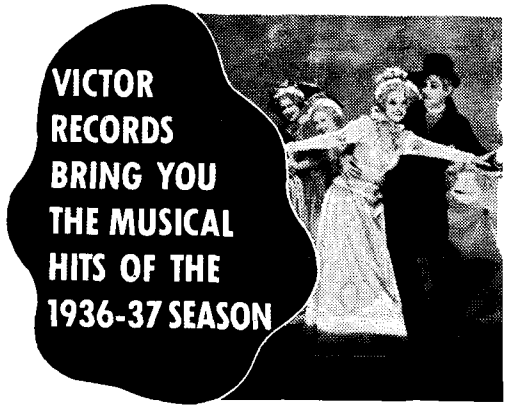
C. G. PROSPERE
Washington, Mississippi

The author of the following letter, a former contributor to the *Atlantic*, has been handicapped for years by certain physical limitations. She has developed, a friend informs us, 'a philosophy of the mole hill, so to speak, which seeks the comedy and tragedy of life within the limits that handicaps have set.' She writes of the difficulties encountered in making photographs to illustrate a children's book on the honeybee.

Dear Allie, —

The other Sunday afternoon near two o'clock and before we had had our dinner, Mother called to me, 'The bees are swarming!' I received the news with joy and dismay mixed. With joy because here was a fine chance to get a good swarm picture; it was Sunday, no classes to claim my time; and it was afternoon — the light would be perfect. The dismay was over my costume, for I was clad in embroidered silk lounging pyjamas much too elegant for handling swarms. But I snatched a queen cage from the cupboard and rushed out, embroidery and all. I arrived in time to see the queen come forth. Since her wing had been clipped weeks before, it was a simple matter to get her into the cage. Then, as the bees were still rushing out, I judged that I should have time to run in, undo the twenty-two fastenings of those convenient pyjamas, and get into something more suitable.

When I returned to the hive, the swarm was still in the air. Fine. Nothing could stop me now from guiding those bees to the oak branch I had selected days before. There, with the swarm hanging just at the right height against a perfect background and lighted by the slanting rays of the afternoon sun, I would produce a masterpiece of photography. Such a chance might not occur again for a year. I picked up the cage — and groaned aloud. It was empty. In my haste I had not closed it properly. But clipped queens have a way of crawling about on the ground in front of the hive. I began searching eagerly, hoping to find the one that had escaped before the swarm missed her and came back to the old home. I examined every inch of ground for several feet



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from the hive. She was not there. In despair and disgust I turned away thinking, 'I'll go light the smoker and open the hive. Of course she has n't gone inside, but — ' Then away around behind the hive my eye caught a suspicious little knot of bees in the grass. I pounced upon it and poke it with my finger. There, sure enough, was the queen. In a few seconds I was over by the lemon holding the caged queen high among the angry bees. Presently bees began settling on the cage and on my hand. I walked slowly to the place where I wanted them to cluster and tied the cage among the leaves.

At that moment I had no doubt that in a few minutes the entire swarm would be clustered ready for photographing. I went into the house, buttoned the dress I had merely thrown on, collected the chair, stool, and cracker box that I used for a tripod also the old coat that serves as headcloth, and the camera.

Then I started carrying the paraphernalia out to the swarm. As I neared the tree I noted with satisfaction that the air was clear of flying bees; doubtless I had a fine cluster awaiting me. But when I arrived where I could see them, a measly little double handful of bees clung to the cage; all the rest had gone back to the hive. I decided to try shaking the bees from the combs on to the ground under the caged queen, hoping that they would be called by her odor and cluster on the branch around the cage. I had tried that unsuccessfully the week before, but those bees were not trying to swarm. Perhaps these would behave differently. I began the tedious task of carrying each comb the seventy feet or so from the hive to the tree, shaking off the bees, and carrying it back again. Each time some of the bees stayed with the queen and some went back to the hive. I kept on until I had carried all the eight combs in the brood-chamber at least twice and some of them three times. Finally I had a very respectable swarm hanging in the tree.

By that time it was nearly three-thirty and only about fifteen minutes remained before the shadow of a tree would fall on the cluster. But fifteen minutes would be enough, and I set to work arranging chair and stool and box and camera, pleasantly excited by the certainty of success. Then, with the coat over my head and the golden-brown bees beginning to show clear and bright on the ground glass, I suddenly felt faint. Too much running about on an empty stomach. I tried to hurry, but it was no use; I had to stop and lie down on the ground.

That was the darkest moment of the afternoon. To fail after so much effort, and with success so sure. I struggled desperately to overcome the faintness quickly; I propped my feet up on the chair, drank a glass of buttermilk Mother brought me, fanned myself with a hat, and breathed deeply, now and then squinting anxiously at the narrow strip of blue between the sun and the treetop. And I am glad to be able to give this little near-tragedy a happy ending after all. I got up presently, and, by working fast, took two very good pictures of that swarm in the last five minutes before the shadow fell upon it.

FLORA MCINTYRE
Pasadena, California

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Do you like to discover NEW AUTHORS?

Dear Atlantic Reader:

Which did you hear about first? *Lost Horizon*, or *Goodbye Mr. Chips?* Probably the latter, but *Lost Horizon* was published eight months before *Mr. Chips* appeared in the pages of the April 1935 Atlantic.

It was over a year after publication, when the Atlantic and Mr. Alexander Woollcott had made the name of James Hilton known to countless thousands — that *Lost Horizon* began to achieve the popularity which it deserved. This is an example of what happens many times each year to books, however excellent, by unknown authors.

Some time ago we thought of a scheme which we hoped would make it easier and quicker to bring to the attention of the reading public unusual and distinguished literature by unknown or little known writers. We formed the Discoverers. Our purpose is to gather around us a group of people with the same gambling spirit and interest in unusual writing that we as publishers must have. Approximately once a month we send out to the members a new book.

This selection of the Discoverers is sent out two weeks in advance of general publication and is a numbered and autographed copy of the first edition. The number of books sent out is limited to 2500. There is no guarantee that every selection will be popular with all of the members. But it is hoped that by offering a varied selection each publishing season, the members will find three or four books which they may be proud to have discovered, even before the critics have seen them.

The plan of the Discoverers works briefly as follows: We publish approximately twelve Discoverers selections a year, one each month. Three times a year we send out to the Discoverers a circular containing complete descriptions of the books to be issued in the next four-month period, information as to how the club operates, comments from subscribers, and an order blank on which members may mark their choice for the four-month period then beginning. The books will then be sent to the Discoverers as ready always two weeks in advance of general publication, and each book numbered and autographed at no advance over the regular price. Our circular for the summer season is now ready. Drop us a line if you are interested.

An early subscriber wrote: "It is hardly possible in selecting books to read, to cover the whole field of publications, so that when a scheme such as your Discoverers comes to my attention I like very much to investigate it. *Locos* (our first selection) interested me exceedingly." Other letters have been enthusiastic about, and critical of, one or another of the selections. That is as it should be. Tastes vary, and so do our selections.

As you may have heard, Hervey Allen has written a new book, *Action at Aquila,* which Farrar and Rinehart will publish in the season of 1937-1938. This is his first novel since Anthony Adverse and will be in great demand. Mr. Allen is one of the original members of the Discoverers and has offered to autograph first edition copies of his new novel for Discoverers only. This offer is limited to members who have bought at least three 1937 Discoverers selections prior to publication of *Action at Aquila.* An autographed edition of an Allen novel for $2.50, the regular price, is something quite special.

The March Discoverers Selection was *Buckskin Breeches*, Phil Stong's latest and longest novel, chosen because it marked a departure from his earlier books. The current book, sent out the middle of May, is *A Mighty Fortress* by Le Grand Cannon, Jr. Your bookseller will show it to you, and will be glad to tell you about the Discoverers as well.

If, then, you are interested in learning more about the plan, and about the books we have selected for the summer, send us a card or fill out and mail the coupon below. There is no obligation. If you join the Discoverers you will want to do so in time to receive the June selection, so please act promptly. There are some good books coming.

The Discoverers

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The Atlantic BOOKSHELF

A Guide to Good Books

THE youngest daughter of the late Sir Leslie Stephen, Virginia Woolf has been acknowledged as a penetrating critic, praised for the fastidiousness of her prose style, and regarded (though not always with understanding) as an innovator in the art of fiction. *Jacob's Room* and *Mrs. Dalloway* are the best known of her earlier novels. *The Waves*, a more experimental narrative, was published in 1931. Since then critics and readers have waited to learn the new direction of her work.

The Years, by Virginia Woolf

[Harcourt, Brace, $2.50]

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S new novel is, like so much of her work, and like so much contemporary fiction, chiefly concerned with the passing of time. We are first shown the children of Colonel Abel Pargiter in 1880; their childhood and youth are described against a Victorian background; they grow up, they marry, — or do not marry, — they grow old, they become a tissue of memories; and we see them finally, at the present day, their hair white, their memories wandering, handsome or bloated shells in a world that has left them behind.

This is not the book one expected of Mrs. Woolf after *The Waves*. To be sure, her individual and fascinating technique seemed in that novel to have reached a conclusion; it was difficult to see how she could go any further without repeating herself. But one did not expect that she would almost entirely abandon, except for certain stylistic mannerisms, the method of capturing life which she had there, and in earlier books, worked out with such grace and accomplishment. Yet in *The Years* that is just what she has done. Though she is more deft than Galsworthy, her theme and method in his new novel are fundamentally a reversion to Galsworthy's theme and method — the method she once deliberately repudiated. The interior monologue is put aside, and the characters are revealed in the old-fashioned manner, almost entirely through conversation. Consequently the book, from the technical point of view, is uncertain, and there are, surprisingly, imitative passages which will be distressing to Mrs. Woolf's admirers. For example, near the end, when she is describing the evening party which brings all the main characters together for the last time, two children are brought in, the children of the caretaker, to sing a song. They sing it; but the words are meaningless: 'Etho passo tanno hai,' they chant senselessly. It is meant to be a symbol, a bitter commentary. But it does n't come off; it is merely bad Aldous Huxley.

This uncertainty of technique, of presentation, is reflected by, or perhaps is a reflection of, an uncertainty in point of view. The grace and delight we felt in much of Mrs. Woolf's earlier writing came from her ability to communicate a kind of radiance, a glimmering sheen, on the surface of experience. The wave might break, but while it was breaking it caught, in a dazzle of whiteness, the glory of the sun. And because Mrs. Woolf made us see that radiance, that momentary beauty in her characters, we saw it, for the moment, in our own experience; we were given, for the moment, new eyes. But *The Years*, in spite of all Mrs. Woolf can do, does not give us that experience. These people have little dignity and little pathos, and when they ask, as others of Mrs. Woolf's characters have asked before, 'What is life? What does it mean?' they see no radiance on the crest of the breaking wave. 'She took down a book. . . . She opened it. . . . That was it. Precisely . . . *la petitesse de toutes choses m'emplit de dégoût.*'

I do not want to suggest, however, that there are not admirable things in this novel. The opening section, for example, is finely done; it is deft, convincing, and delightful. In fact one begins the book by feeling that this may be the best thing that Mrs. Woolf has written. But the feeling does not last; and as we read further we become increasingly aware that the élan, the vision, the particular flavor which belonged to Mrs. Woolf's earlier work — all these have disappeared. Instead we have a sense of labor and fatigue. It is perhaps significant that not once — the story covers many people and many years — are we given a convincing picture of the love of one human being for another.

The weakness of this particular book raises certain questions in the mind of anyone concerned with the present state of the novel. Does this weakness represent merely the lapse of an individual talent? Or is it also the symbol of the desiccation of a method and a point of view?

Mrs. Woolf, like many writers of her generation, has stressed the importance of emotion and sensation for themselves alone. When the strength of feeling has slackened, when the sensitiveness has grown dull, — as they have in this book, — there is little left. There is merely the passing of time, merely the movement of the years. But the novelist's job is not only to convey a sense of evanescence; he must also create characters solid enough to give us the illusion of permanence. This Mrs. Woolf has not done. And her inability to do so represents, I believe, the end of a movement in recent fiction.

THEODORE SPENCER

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The BOOKSHELF

***Let Me Live*, by Angelo Herndon**

[Random House, $2.50]

It is fools like me — and we run high into the thousands — who need Angelo Herndon's book, *Let Me Live*. We knew, of course, about the case of the young Negro, and we have been violently and sincerely and sporadically indignant over it; some of us have even listened to speeches or signed letters or sent contributions, that the preposterous business might be brought to a higher, and, it was hoped, a saner, court. We would have said, and believed it while we were saying it, that we knew all the facts. Well, we did n't. And those we did know we could n't really believe, or, to be kinder to us, we could n't toughen our minds to grasp. We needed them stacked solidly between book covers; we needed sharp black print and cold white paper to clear the rosy mists from our vision. You cannot raise your eyes from the pages of *Let Me Live* and descry how delightfully dew-pearled is the hillside.

Angelo Herndon's book is much more than a report of the Angelo Herndon case. It is the story of his life, — he is now twenty-four, — curiously touching in the manner of its telling. Mr. Herndon found honest publishers at Random House; no seasoned ghost came between the young man and his book. An experienced writer would have learned — and a born writer would have known — enough to keep it dead simple, to set down events and speeches without comment, and to leave them that way. John Steinbeck could have made a perfect book of Angelo Herndon's story, a book to live in literature and to tear your heart out in the meantime. Mr. Herndon seems to have gone, for his style, to a writer he doubtless never read and probably never heard of: the late Horatio Alger. But that very style, the innocence of his hard-labored phrases, like a good boy writing home, attains a most competent result of tearing out the heart.

Let Me Live is a sombre and terrible life story. But it is not tragedy; the protagonist remains unbroken. From the time when, playing with some little white boys, he first heard the word 'nigger' and laughed at the funny sound (the little white boys saw he did not know what it meant, and straightway taught him with sticks and stones), on through his days as a child laborer in the Kentucky mines, driven, overworked, cheated, living always among the cheated, the driven, the starving, his spirit grew in him. Such things are contagious. Your own spirit stretches as you read his book — stretches till it reaches a good respectable height at the account of Herndon's trial for his life, on a forgotten slave law against 'insurrection,' five years ago in Georgia.

That trial is completely unbelievable; save that it happened. Actually, the question 'Would you want yo' daughter to marry a nigger, suh?' was roared at a white witness. Actually, the prosecutor, the Reverend Hudson, thundered, 'This is not only a trial of Angelo Herndon, but of Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky and Kerensky. . . . As fast as the Communists come here, we shall indict them, and I shall demand the death penalty in every case.' Actually, the incendiary literature found in the prisoner's room, and offered as evidence, included the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Red Book Magazine*. ('Look at the red covering of this magazine, *Red Book*,' cried the Reverend Hudson to the jury. 'Is not that proof enough?') Actually, the reverend prosecutor prayed the jury to 'send this damnable anarchistic Bolsheviki to his death by electrocution, and God will be satisfied that justice has been done and the daughters of the state officials can walk the streets safely.' Actually, the jury 'showed mercy' and gave the boy twenty years on the chain gang — and God alone can compute how many death sentences that equals. . . .

There is real exercise for the spirit in the record of that trial, and the memory of it. But for the inducing of high and sustained fury I suggest the reading, in the appendices of the book, of the speech to the jury by Chief Jailer Holland, keeper of the unspeakable prison where Angelo Herndon was confined. Such reading may be constructive in its effect. Anger is often a form of labor pains.

I wish, for our national comfort, that *Let Me Live* were a freak, a literary curiosity. But, it is a vital document in American history, a record of fierce importance. It is a book to place in cornerstones; and may we spin in our graves when a future generation shall unearth it, and know that it was true!

Dorothy Parker

***The Hundred Years*, by Philip Guedalla**

[Doubleday, Doran, $3.00]

Mr. Guedalla's hundred years turn out to be but nine-and-ninety, and the small discrepancy opens a crevice more than ample for springing one of those grotesque traps that wait for the man of letters undertaking to compromise artistic considerations with journalistic. The scope of the book and its thesis are packed into the first sentence of a prefatory note: 'One hundred years ago next [i.e., this] June the world heard for the first time of Queen Victoria; and the world we live in is largely the result of that eventful century.' The boldly selective method of presentation adopted is 'to describe the leading moments of the century as they affected the leading units of the Western world.' These units are Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, and the United States. The 'moments' are 1837, 1848, 1861, ten other more and less pivotal years, and finally 1936; for the tactical exigencies of publication had decreed that the author must take leave of his manuscript in July of last year. The cadence on which the whole narrative closes is a glimpse of Edward VIII walking bareheaded on a winter afternoon behind the draped gun-carriage of his father's funeral cortège. Mr. Guedalla, who is an indefatigable pursuer of historic echoes, found in this glimpse a piercing echo of the unceremonious ceremony whereby on a summer morning of 1837 Victoria learned of her accession. On the one episode he opens the narrative, on the other he rounds it to a poetic close; and

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each is supposed to lead the imagination into a long vista.

Alas for purely literary inevitability, within a matter of months the new King was an ex-King, and Mr. Guedalla's expressive characterization was bathos. ('The watching streets . . . had already learnt to know him better than they knew any of his subjects; and twenty years of active life had taught him almost all that there was to be known of them. . . .') A brilliant journalist-historian had got his centenary book ready well before the coronation, but it was the coronation of the wrong King. One is tempted to add that it was also the wrong country: for the stable and pacific England of his valedictory was even then on the brink of world readjustments that were to compromise its prestige, call its moral credit into grave question, and undermine its self-confidence — developments to which it finds no answer except the most colossal programme of rearmament ever devised. The world is indeed 'largely the result of that eventful century,' but somehow, after the brutal ironies of Mr. Guedalla's omitted year, — a year almost certainly as crucial as most that he includes, — we do not seem to be living in quite the world he is talking about, and we are left excusably wondering how far a divination so much less than realistic about the end of the story is to be relied upon for balance and proportion in the story itself.

The Hundred Years contains, of course, many passages written with supreme virtuosity, of which none is more brilliant than the character sketch of William II of the Hohenzollerns. Some of the interpretations of major international developments make basic hypotheses of the professional historian for the first time really luminous to popular readers. If, as I surmise, the book is giving a good many such readers a new appetite for the study of modern history at the sources, even the more austere pundits of the profession may well forgo the customary gibe about 'fictional history.' They could even afford to forgive Mr. Guedalla his chronic indifference to the one kind of literary art he lacks — the kind that attests by concealing itself.

WILSON FOLLETT

***The Incredible Messiah: The Deification of Father Divine*, by Robert Allerton Parker**

[Atlantic Monthly Press and Little, Brown, $2.50]

ANY man or any god who can inspire the adulation of two million people, who can support them or make them self-supporting, who can discipline them with kindness, and slake their human lusts, is one to command the audience of scholars. Father Divine is such a one, his followers claim; the rest of us must at least admit that he is a shrewd psychologist. Two biographies of the man-god of Harlem have appeared within the year, and in this, the second, Mr. Parker portrays him squarely.

It would have been easy to mock the little man, or to condemn him offhand as a racketeer, but the author has done neither. Tolerantly and intelligently he has sought to appraise his power and the subjection of his disciples, building a sturdy thesis on fact, the simple history, the

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good and foolish issues, and the precipitant drive of man to find a heaven on earth.

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Mr. Parker seems as puzzled as the investigating police to account for the man's power. It is not enough to call it the jet of a spiritual or sociological need, which other Messiahs have for centuries exploited. Father Divine, ostensibly, has wooed his followers with the most moral precepts, effectuating honesty, sobriety, and charity among them. But on the other hand he has torn their homes apart through his preachment that earthly love is vile; he has convinced them that curative measures not achieved by faith in him are false; worst of all, he has encouraged the dereliction of adult responsibility.

Partly, of course, his influence has been strengthened by his curious immunity from the law. So far he has paid no tax of any sort on income or his vast properties. Many of his enemies have died. Until the time of this writing it would have been safe to say that the incalculable dollars contributed, but never banked in his name, by his communally working disciples might protect him, but now this seems unlikely. The Philistines of the law are on the tail of the little mouse which brought forth such an unaccountable mountain.

Mr. Parker has covered his subject thoroughly and written a book of interest to the student of sociology and the lay reader alike. There are but two aspects of it which he has slighted. What of Mother Divine, herself accredited with miracles? And what if 'God' dies?

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THIS is generally regarded as not one of the more favorable times for the publication of poetry, either from the publisher's or from the poet's point of view. But poetry continues to be published. It lives at both ends: witness a current 'collected' edition proffering the summed-up work of a lifetime, and a novice volume giving promise of new achievement.

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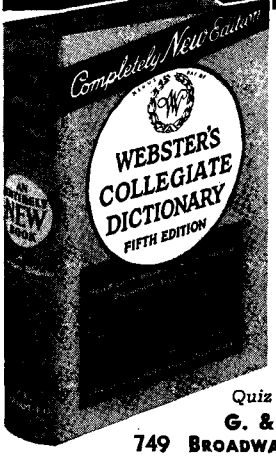

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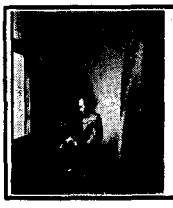

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strengthen this respect. What Miss Converse has to say in her best poems is more important than the poetry itself considered as expression; yet she is also a proficient worker in verse. She knows, for example, how to write a conversational or quasi-dramatic poem, as in 'The Radical' or 'The Voices,' an epitomized sketch of Joan of Arc. She knows that the sentences and clauses in such a poem must be brief, the interchange of statement and reply quick and unentangled; and she can meet these technical demands without loss to the verse-medium. She writes also with a certain passionateness; when her theme is important and serious, the poem seldom lets it down. Some of the occasional pieces in the volume will have no value for the general reader; some of the travel sketches exhibit a kind of sprightliness which will not be to everyone's taste. The religious poems most nearly approach lasting value, perhaps, most certainly combine poetry of expression with importance of theme. For Miss Converse is a spiritual poet in both a good and a bad sense: good, in so far as the spirit is a concern that life should justify itself to its own best conscience by integrity, justice, generosity, humility before the mystery of things; bad, in so far as the spiritual is the fleshless, the skimmed and cerebral. Each one of us, after all, is a biological centre of experience that comes to us quite physically, through organs; the poet is especially a creature of the senses. Miss Converse's poems will seem to some readers to have no viscera. To sympathize with them fully, one must be not merely spiritual, but also a little rarefied.

John Hall Wheelock, in his ***Poems, 1911–1936*** (Scribners, $2.50), shows himself a devoted and sincere disciple of the art, but more notable for the sense of exaltation with which he writes than for his actual performance on the page. The difficulty is that he seems to write from a fund of vague, expansive emotion; he never individualizes a character, never makes a scene stand out sharp and clear in its own precise details, and seldom succeeds in finding even an image which is distinct or definite. It will not suffice to excuse him on the ground that mystical ecstasy is beyond expression, ineffable, incommunicable. This is the common report of mystics, it is true; but those of them who manage to impress their experience on others, even if they cannot divulge the heart of the mystery, at least trace the steps to it with sharpness and preciseness enough, and embroider the path with figures and images cut in clear and definite lines. Mr. Wheelock's whole poetical stock seems to consist of rapturous but undifferentiated, unparticularized feeling; and as the emotion is undefined, so the expression is indistinct, putting up with all manner of phrases from the common sentimental store. Mr. Wheelock writes essentially the same poem whether he calls it 'Song from beyond Death' or 'Sunday in the Park.' At times the genuineness of his emotion proves communicable, and then the reader comes on a passage in which a sense of exalted participation in the sum of things is truly given. This is Mr. Wheelock's poetry at its best; at its all too frequent worst it is a poetry of pink mist.

THEODORE MORRISON

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TALENT and that accumulation of talent which we call genius obey a kind of natural law in their manifestation. Musicians discover themselves first: history is full of musical prodigies who began to play or compose before they were ten. Then come mathematicians. Poets are generally setting the world on fire before they are twenty. But dramatists, novelists, and philosophers take longer to mature.

Shortly after the war, **Noel Coward** was hailed as the new prodigy of the English theatre; and indeed, since 1921 his performance has been prodigious. He has written so many plays (the spring of 1925 he had three running simultaneously in London), he has composed so many songs, so much music, and has himself acted in so many smash hits (or such sensational failures), that it is no wonder if he gives the impression of having gone too fast. That he has occasionally become world-weary he freely admits. Now at the age of thirty-seven he takes time off to write the first half of his autobiography, a book which, like his plays, is witty, observant, sensitive, and best when read aloud.

Present Indicative (Doubleday, Doran, $3.00) is delightfully self-conscious. Mr. Coward's flair for comedy never found happier expression — partly because he is shamelessly honest about his ego and its humiliations, partly because of his delicious skill with words, and partly because of his acute theatre-sense. But this is more than a book of humor. It is a story of poverty, of a devoted, plucky mother who ran a boarding house against heavy odds; of a precocious boy with little learning who squirmed his way into the theatre when he was *eleven* years old and has seldom had it out of his mind since; of a youth who was badly spoiled by success, but recovered; of a man remarkably talented as a dramatist, producer, and musician; of an individual self-confident and yet uncertain about his future.

I understand it is good 'theatre' to-day to dismiss lightly the plays of Noel Coward. If one wishes to be condescending, it is easy to remark the absence of depth in this self-portrait, to compare the range of Mr. Coward's writing with that of his older contemporary, Eugene O'Neill, even to disparage the amazing swiftness with which Mr. Coward composes. But such criticism overlooks the fact that this is a highly selective book: a book written with impudence, a marvelous light touch, and — diffidence. It should be taken for the entertainment it contains, entertainment as plentiful and genuine as I can remember in any memoir of the stage.

Edward Weeks

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